

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIV, Issue No. 070

WEDNESDAY MARCH 10, 2004

www.saipantribune.com 50¢

I N S I D E

See NORITA on Page 8

See HOUSE on Page 8

Local

Comedian Navarette doubles-up Saipan

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

Wild laughter and frequent applause filled the Dai-Ichi Hotel Saipan Beach’s Hibiscus Hall on Saturday night as Filipino-American comedian Rex Navarette performed for some 500 people, joking about the Filipino mentality, immigrant experience, and his mother.

Following a short pre-show by Guam’s amateur comedy series champion Frank Rios, Navarette took the stage with nothing but a bottle of water. For the next hour and a half, he brought to life his famous characters, from his ESL [“English as a Stupid Language”] teacher Mrs. Scott to his Irish high school friend Brian and to his Uncle [or “Tito”] Boy.

Navarette humored the crowd with his stories about his early years in the San Francisco Bay Area, knowing only one English sentence, and having his grandfather for a babysitter. He also told hilarious jokes about the Filipino accent and the many “similarities” between the Irish and the Filipino peoples. [“The Irish were butchered by the English; us



Filipinos butcher English.”] In fact, his mother and her own prejudice against Filipinos have provided Navarette with most of his material for his lampooning and often irreverent routines.

He made fun of his mother’s strange pieces of advice whenever he went traveling to the Philippines: blink your eyes only twice a day so kidnappers won’t think you’re Chinese, and surround yourself with *chicharon* to keep the Muslim extremists away.

Navarette went on to comment on the practice of Filipinos, or Asians for that matter, of using their bare hands for eating. “Quoting” his mother, Navarette posed the question: “If I used my hand to eat rice at home, I’m Third World; but if I ate at McDonald’s and used my hand to pick French Fries, I’m First World?”

In an interview after the show, Navarette said he had fun performing for the Saipan crowd, which has been receptive to his comedy.

“The audience was excellent. I don’t know if you guys get stand up comedy here often, but it was really nice to perform for the first time here in front of a fresh audience. The people just let go of a lot of stuff,” said Navarette, who has been in the entertainment busi-

ness for 15 years now. He said he tries to make his routine universal to get more people to connect with his jokes. The immigrant experience, he said, is one good example of a universal theme.

“Everyone has immigrant experience, making some kind of transition to a new land. There’s a lot of comedy you can find in adjusting and discrimination,” he said.

While he normally has a working script for his acts, Navarette leaves room for spontaneity during his performances.

“I write down ideas, but I don’t necessarily script them all out. I just kind of like use the stage as my work-in-progress board. If [a joke] is good, I keep it. I remember it for the next time and develop it some more. The routines sometimes come on stage, or when you’re walking around, getting some groceries or just observing people,” he said.

Navarette started doing stand up comedy at age 19. In his trade, he has found a venue to comment on things that otherwise would not be mentioned.

“I guess it is my mission to showcase Filipino life and the mind of the Filipino. We’re beyond the United States now. We’re everywhere; we’re really part of the world,” Navarette said.

Nevertheless, he said he

does not claim to be able to reach every Filipino through his comedy. He noted that there are some Filipinos who actually find offensive or insulting the things he talks about on stage.


“They’d say, ‘You’re on stage with an accent; we don’t have an accent.’ But yes, we do and it’s okay. You’re the one discriminating against yourself when you start teaching Filipinos to be ashamed,” Navarette said. “That is the sound of my characters. I’m not going to fake it or make it cheap. I’m going to give you the real sound.”

And what does his mother think? “At first, she found me very offensive. But now that I’ve become ‘famous’ in her eyes and her friends’ eyes, she’s accepting it,” he replied. He added that the prejudice against Filipinos he portrays on stage signifies not so much his mother’s own attitude on how Filipinos in general think of their fellowmen.

Organizer Nathan Sablan described Budweiser’s Rxxxx Rated Comedy Show as very successful. He said Marpac, which distributes the beer brand in the CNMI, plans to bring more comedy acts to the island.

Other sponsors were Continental Airlines, Dai-Ichi Hotel, Aquarius Beach Tower, Budget Rental Car, Coca Cola, Power 99, and The Rock.

verizon
cmyk



The Saipan Tribune accepts contributed photos of birthdays, weddings, baptisms, and other community and family events for free publication. Material submitted should be original and not copyrighted, in digital or print format. Must include a caption containing complete details for description of the event, location of the persons in the picture, the date, and the place, the name of the contributor, and a contact number. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to edit the caption, the date of publication and the date of the picture. Contributors can e-mail their submissions to editor@saipantribune.com. To check if contributions are received, call 223-6207, 223-3446, or 223-4743.

PHI

lottery

pestex

hardt eye


pierce
+RED




WEATHER FORECAST

PICTURE TIME: 1:00 AM., MARCH 9, 2004
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.


Fresh to strong trade winds across much of Micronesia converging into lighter winds near the Equator are producing scattered showers between the Equator and 8n from 130e to 153 and between the Equator and 6n from 160e to 180. A cold front stretches from 25n161e to 20n146e and continues as a shear line to 19n130e. Low- and mid-level clouds...light rain and showers associated this feature extend up to 200 miles north of the boundary. Trade wind convergence south of the cold front/shear line is producing low clouds and showers between 12n and 18n from 132e to 150e. This area includes the Mariana Islands.





SAIPAN AND TINIAN
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 mph. Highs near 87. Lows near 76.





GUAM AND ROTA
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 mph. Highs near 87. Lows near 76.


**PALAU**
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.




















**POHNPEI**
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.

**YAP AND ULITHI**
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.

**KOSRAE**
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 10-15 kt.

**CHUUK**
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.

**MAJURO**
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 kt.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
 Auckland	Sunny	71F (22C)	60F (16C)
 Beijing	Sunny	65F (18C)	48F (9C)
 Hong Kong	Sunny	74F (23C)	61F (16C)
 Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	82F (28C)	68F (20C)
 London, England	Sunny	45F (7C)	30F (-1C)
 Los Angeles	Sunny	79F (26C)	59F (15C)
 Manila	Partly Cloudy	88F (31C)	73F (23C)
 Melbourne	Sunny	75F (24C)	59F (15C)
 Miami	Partly Cloudy	72F (22C)	54F (12C)
 New York City	Cloudy	40F (4C)	34F (1C)
 Osaka	Partly Cloudy	37F (3C)	25F (-4C)
 Paris	Partly Cloudy	38F (3C)	25F (-4C)
 Pusan	Partly Cloudy	53F (12C)	39F (4C)
 Rome	Cloudy	49F (9C)	30F (-1C)
 Salem, Oregon	Partly Cloudy	60F (16C)	40F (4C)
 San Francisco	Sunny	68F (20C)	52F (11C)
 Seoul	Partly Cloudy	47F (8C)	35F (2C)
 Tokyo, Japan	Partly Cloudy	42F (6C)	36F (2C)
 Washington, DC	Cloudy	45F (7C)	34F (1C)

JOETEN MOTORS
+BLUE

FHB

Interior Department on front lines of coral reef conservation

The Department of Interior is playing a key role in a science-based, community-level campaign to protect coral reefs and is working with a variety of state, territorial and international partners to increase understanding of the problems plaguing these sensitive ecosystems around the globe, Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks Craig Manson said today.

This week in Miami, scientists and coral reef managers from the department will join their counterparts from Florida, Puerto Rico, Hawaii and six Pacific island jurisdictions to discuss the health of U.S. coral reefs and efforts to save them.

“Interior Department agencies are leading the way in efforts to deal with the crisis in our coral reefs,” said Manson, who is co-chair of the United States Coral Reef Task Force.

“We have made significant progress in recent years but there is much to be done. We need a global effort to study and reverse the threats to these sensitive ecosystems.”

Coral reefs are storehouses of immense biological value that provide an estimated \$375 billion each year to the world economy from recreation, tourism, food, pharmaceuticals, and other purposes. The benefits to Florida, for example, exceed \$3 billion.

Coral reefs also protect our coastlines from storm damage and prevent erosion, a benefit for Floridians and coastal communities in the Pacific during hurricanes and typhoons. They also provide shelter and food for as many as 10 million animals and plants and are the oldest and largest structures made by living organisms on the planet. The same factors that make

them so important make them vulnerable to over exploitation.

Five agencies within the Interior Department are working on the ground and underwater to monitor the health of coral reefs and enhance their protection. Much of the work is done collaboratively with local communities, state and territorial government agencies and academia to address threats to coral reef ecosystems.

National Park Service: In Florida, the National Park Service manages more than 800,000 acres of coral reefs and marine habitats in three National Parks. Biscayne National Park near Miami has joined forces with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to develop a joint Fisheries Management Plan that transcends boundaries to restore fish populations across the Park

and state-managed areas. The National Park Service also put regulations in place to protect the new Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument and the expanded Buck Island Reef National Monument from anchoring and overfishing.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: National Wildlife Refuges protect approximately three million acres of coral reefs in Florida, the Caribbean, Hawaii and the Pacific. In addition, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has sponsored local watershed protection projects in the Pacific islands that reduce land-based sources of pollution to coral reefs, has provided funding to restore habitat for sea turtles and other endangered species, and developed a mitigation strategy that will help federal agencies restore U.S. coral reef resources affected by federally funded coastal construction projects.

U.S. Geological Survey: The USGS is conducting vital research to increase understanding of how coral reefs respond to threats such as sediment pollution, water quality impacts, coral diseases and global climate change. The

USGS is determining causes of high levels of sedimentation on reefs in Hawaii and the Pacific Islands. USGS scientists also are investigating the effects of global climate change on corals, including the ability of corals to resist increases in sea surface temperatures and intense ultraviolet radiation in the National Park of American Samoa.

Office of Insular Affairs: The Office of Insular Affairs provides technical and financial assistance to support management and protection of coral reefs in the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Pacific islands of Guam, American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, where the majority of reefs under U.S. jurisdiction are located.

Minerals Management Service: Since the early 1970s, MMS has supported a comprehensive program of mapping, monitoring and protection for coral reefs of the East and West Flower Garden Banks, a National Marine Sanctuary in the Gulf of Mexico. MMS used the information to develop lease stipulations for gas and oil exploration, development, and production near the Sanctuary

that have been completely effective in preventing environmental impacts.

The U.S. Coral Reef Task Force was established by Presidential Executive Order in 1998 to focus federal, state, and territorial efforts on the major threats to the nation’s coral reefs, and finding ways to stem those threats. Craig Manson, Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks, co-chairs the Task Force on behalf of Interior Secretary Gale Norton, along with Tim Keeney, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere at the Department of Commerce.

Americans can learn more about the importance of coral reefs to products that they value in their lives. The next time you purchase salt water fish for your aquarium, buy grouper or yellow-fin tuna for dinner, or purchase a coral necklace for a loved one, think about where these resources originated. Buy products that were harvested in a responsible manner. Learn about coral reef products that are protected by international trade laws and don’t bring those products back into the U.S. from your vacation.

2004 W-2CM forms distribution to start today

The Division of Revenue and Taxation wishes to inform all CNMI employers that the distribution of the 2004 W-2CM forms and Instructions will begin today, Dec.

13, 2004 from 8am to 4pm at the office of the Division of Revenue and Taxation located at the Dandan Commercial Center.

All businesses and employ-

ers are asked, to pick up forms during the regular business hours beginning Dec. 13, 2004. The deadline for filing 2004 W-2CM form is Feb. 28, 2005 at 4:30pm.

JOSTEN MOTORS
+BLUE

BOX TOPS
+MAGENTA/BLUE

House passes recycling deposit bill

By **LIBERTY DONES**
REPORTER

Saying it would significantly help reduce solid waste and littering in the CNMI, the

The House of Representatives passed last week a bill mandating a deposit fee of not less than 5 cents and a payout for each beverage sold.

Lawmakers passed House Bill 14-211 or the proposed Recycling Deposit Fee and Payout Program Act of 2004, authored by Rep. Janet Maratita.

The House Ways and Means Committee said in a report that 50 percent of litter is comprised

of used beverage containers.

“Providing a payout incentive such as a recycling deposit fee and a payout program will deter and reduce littering,” said the committee, chaired by Rep. Norman S. Palacios.

Under the bill, a deposit fee of not less than 5 cents shall be levied and paid by the consumer on each beverage container purchased in the CNMI.

Upon return, at least 75 percent of the amount of the refund value shall be paid back to the consumer.

The refund is claimed from redemption centers, which can be set up by any individual upon approval of the Division

of Environmental Quality.

The bill provides that dealers shall remit all deposits collected each month to the CNMI Treasury under the “recycling deposit fund.” The funds collected would be used as reimbursement for refunded amounts and for expenses related to redemption centers’ activities.

Reverse vending machines may be used by redemption centers provided that the machine shall accept one or more types of empty deposit beverage containers and shall pay out appropriate refunds as coins or via a redeemable credit slip.

GLUSHKOS

DCCA learns the ropes on dealing with conflict

Conflict is a necessary and healthy part of the life of all organizations. The Department of Community and Cultural Affairs learned the truth of that statement at a personal development workshop on “Improved Communications” sponsored by the DCCA Division of Youth Services earlier this month.

The workshop, facilitated by Dr. Ken Shankweiler, elaborated on the importance of good communication skills in the workplace. The daylong training consisted of various group activities and discussions on the basic skills of communication and steps in dealing with conflict.

“The purpose of presenting this workshop on communication was to strengthen our staff’s understanding, skills, and provide them the tools needed when dealing with conflict,” said DYS director Victor Mesta. “As the end product, DYS and the department will be better prepared to obtain its goals and objectives.”

According to Shankweiler, how well a person communicates with people determines what he or she will become in life, personality-wise. As part of the training, participants were reminded to use simple language, to ask for feedback, to think about the receiver of the communication, and to focus on what the receiver needs and wants to know.

“The workshop taught me to be more patient and more understanding toward my co-workers’ needs,” said Genevieve Deleon Guerrero of the DCCA Office of the Secretary. “I also learned that just the way people look and say things also expresses how they really feel, and when others are already mad, I shouldn’t get mad because it only causes more stress.”

In resolving conflict, Shank-

weiler teaches that team leaders must focus on the objective facts, area of needs, and mutual goals; ask for possible solutions from both parties to resolve conflict; have both parties agree on solution; and set up a review. It’s a process that Juvenile Correction Worker I Ricardo R. Rasa plans to implement in his work at the DYS Juvenile Correction and Detention Unit.

“For our job in this field

working with the kids, we learned new skills on how to not let any conflict escalate,” said Rasa. “Even with co-workers, we learned how to deal with staff and control conflicts through procedures.”

The workshop was held at the Hyatt Regency Saipan and was participated in by several DCCA divisions: the Division of Youth Services, Office on Aging, Nutrition Assistance Program, and the Office of the Secretary.

CARS UNLIMITED

Business

Judge upholds order in Yukos bankruptcy

HOUSTON (AP)—A federal judge late Saturday upheld an order that granted Russian oil giant Yukos a temporary injunction halting the auction of its key production subsidiary.

U.S. District Judge Nancy Atlas rejected an appeal from Russian state-controlled natural gas giant Gazprom, which had sought to bid for Yukos in an auction in Russia. She said overturning the order would have done irreparable harm to Yukos, but upholding it would not cause serious harm to Gazprom.

Yukos filed for Chapter 11

bankruptcy Tuesday in Houston. The filing was Yukos' last-ditch effort to block the auction scheduled for Sunday in Moscow, which Gazprom would likely win, making it—and by extension, the Russian government—one of Russia's biggest oil players virtually overnight.

The Russian government planned to sell the subsidiary, Yuganskneftegaz, to pay off some of the \$27.5 billion in back taxes it says is owed by Yukos, Russia's largest oil producer.

Russia had pledged to proceed with the auction, saying

the U.S. order is irrelevant on Russian soil. But Gazprom may not be able to pay for the subsidiary because a consortium of Western banks reportedly put on hold billions of dollars in credit it needs for the purchase.

Atlas said she was sympathetic to Gazprom's claims that the injunction would badly damage the company, but those were not relevant to the case.

"Nothing was filed concerning irreparable injury of the nature that has now been presented," she said.

Yukos attorney Zack Clement

said the judge "offered a well-reasoned opinion, which we appreciate greatly."

Michael Goldberg, a Houston attorney representing Gazprom, said late Saturday that his clients in Moscow would not immediately appeal the ruling to the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans. He did not comment further.

Earlier Saturday Goldberg said, "There is no jurisdiction in this case, and this is not the type of case that a Texas court should be deciding about Russian assets."



General view of Gazprom headquarters is seen, in Moscow, on Friday, Dec. 17, 2004.

Shopping can be a pain in the foot

Whether you're shopping for athletic shoes this season, or just shopping, treat your feet by selecting the right footwear, says Norma Nestor, certified master fit technician at Athlete's Foot.

According to Nestor, an average day of walking brings a force equal to several hundred tons on an individual's feet. Shopping marathons and back-to-back parties during the holiday season will more than likely double that force, leading to foot, leg and back pain.

"Because we use them constantly, feet are one of the most frequently injured parts of our bodies," said Nestor.

Recent medical studies indicate that nearly 80 percent of Americans experience regular foot pain. According to the American Podiatric Medical Association, the average person takes approximately 9,000 steps every day.

"When you consider that the amount of walking a person does more than doubles during the holidays, it is not surprising that a seat on a mall bench is hard to come by during the holidays," Nestor added.

Additionally, nine out of 10 people don't wear properly fit-

ting shoes. Properly fitted athletic shoes can help to alleviate pain associated with physical activity.

"Sizes vary among shoe brands and styles, and feet continue to elongate and spread into adulthood, so feet should be properly measured for each shoe purchase. In addition to size, consumers should seek advice on appropriate styles," she said.

According to Nestor, many athletic shoes may look similar, but different shoes are designed for different foot types. With the wrong shoes, you risk injury.

Consumers should bring an old pair of shoes with them when purchasing new shoes. (This is especially helpful when giving shoes as gifts.) By examining how the older shoes are worn, a good fit technician can determine the proper size, style and level of support necessary.

For more information regarding finding the right athletic footwear for you and your loved ones this holiday season, visit one of your Athlete's Foot stores today. Call Athlete's Foot at 234-1236 or visit them in the Joeten Shopping Center, Susupe or at the Hafa Adai Shopping Center, Garapan. (PR)



SAIPANCELL
CMYK

Mass. cos. deny gay workers some benefits

BOSTON (AP)—Some employers with federally regulated health plans have decided not to extend health benefits to spouses of gay workers, saying the plans are not bound by Massachusetts' same-sex marriage law.

General Dynamics Corp., FedEx Corp. and Caritas Christi Health Care are among the employers that do not provide married gay workers in Massachusetts with the same health benefits available to heterosexual married couples.

"In determining the definition of dependent spouse, General Dynamics applies the spouse definition from the federal

Defense of Marriage Act," the Virginia-based defense contractor, which has 3,000 workers in Massachusetts, said in a statement to the Boston Globe.

The 1996 Defense of Marriage Act denied federal recognition of same-sex marriages by defining marriage as between a man and a woman.

The employers provide medical care through self-insured health plans in which the company—not an insurer—collects premiums and pays the medical bills of its workers.

Such self-insured plans, which are used to save money amid skyrocketing health care costs, are

Bin Laden tape urges stopping oil to US

Osama bin Laden claims to have bled the Soviet Union into bankruptcy as an Islamic guerilla fighter in Afghanistan in the 1980s. Could he do the same to another hated superpower—the United States?

The al-Qaida leader’s latest purported communication drove home the point by calling on militants to stop the flow of oil to the West and praising a Dec. 6 attack on the U.S. Consulate in Saudi Arabia, the world’s top oil producer.

In an audiotape posted on an Islamic Web site Thursday, a man who U.S. officials believe was bin Laden accused Westerners of subjugating the Middle East to plunder its oil.

“Go on and try to prevent them from getting oil,” the speaker said. “Concentrate your operations on that, especially in Iraq and the Gulf.”

It was believed to be the first time a purported bin Laden tape in effect called for attacks on the oil industry. But he has flaunted the economic theme before, recalling in his most recent video how Afghan mujahedeen “bled Russia for 10 years, until it went bankrupt” and taunting the U.S. government over the size of its budget deficit—which peaked at \$413 billion last year.

Security and terrorism experts suggest bin Laden’s claims to be undermining the United States economically are largely propaganda, noting the flexible, market-driven U.S. economy is a far cry from the creaky, bureaucratic Soviet giant that disintegrated in 1991.

Still, the economic argument gives bin Laden a tool he can use to rally his supporters and inflate his aura of success by claiming damage caused by other factors as his own handiwork.

Spurred by the new audiotape, Muslim radicals using chat rooms on Islamic Web sites debated Friday what weapons could be used to attack an oil tanker in the strait of Hormuz in the Gulf.

Bin Laden “sees us as poised on this precipice, and he’s going to push us into the abyss,” said Bruce Hoffman, a terrorism expert at Rand Corporation.

As Bin Laden put it in his video aimed at Americans just days before the Nov. 2 presidential election: “The real loser is you. It is the American people and their economy.”

The al-Qaida leader cites the experience of Afghan mujahedeen fighters “in using guerrilla warfare and the war of attrition to fight tyrannical superpowers” to drive the Soviets out.

Bin Laden was among U.S.-supported Islamic fighters in Afghanistan, backed with money and weapons in hopes of weakening Russia, the United States’ opponent in the Cold War.

The Soviet comparison is aimed as much at bin Laden supporters as at Americans, says Rand analyst Hoffman. “That’s how he motivates and animates people and addresses morale—

telling them, ‘No one thought we could achieve that feat, and by the same token no one thinks we

can achieve this feat of defeating the United States, but we will,’” Hoffman said.

Retired Gen. William Odom, a scholar at the Hudson Institute and an expert in the Soviet

collapse, said bin Laden’s analogy is off base since the Soviet Union collapsed for reasons

other than Afghanistan, including the weakness of its state-run economy. *(AP)*

MICROL
+RED

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XIV, Issue No. 355

Published daily at 2/F Century Insurance Building,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

John Pangelinan PUBLISHER
Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

The time for justice

There are plenty of complications involved in trying Saddam Hussein and others from his regime for crimes committed against the Iraqi people, but none that argues for further delay. Interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi was right to announce that some of the war crimes trials would start next week, including that of Ali Hassan Majid, known as "Chemical Ali," a cousin of Saddam's believed to have used poison gas to murder thousands of Kurds.

If the trials don't get under way, Saddam and his henchmen may never face justice. It's true that Allawi's every move in the run-up to the Jan. 30 elections is politically motivated, especially now that he has declared his own candidacy. But it could be a long wait before a democratic government with more legitimacy could initiate these proceedings, and the mostly Sunni defendants would still accuse the majority Shiites of unfairness. Indeed, the legal safeguards afforded the defendants, combined with the weight of the evidence, will determine whether these trials are deemed credible. For that reason, the government should televise the proceedings.

There is also a matter of basic fairness and due process. Keeping Saddam's lieutenants indefinitely locked up without charging them is hardly the way to launch a new democracy, even if Washington has set a poor example at Guantanamo Bay.

It's almost unavoidable, as the Nuremberg war crimes trials showed, that these trials will be seen to some extent as "victor's justice." In 1945, U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice Harlan Fiske Stone called the prosecution being led by his colleague Robert Jackson a "high-grade lynching party."

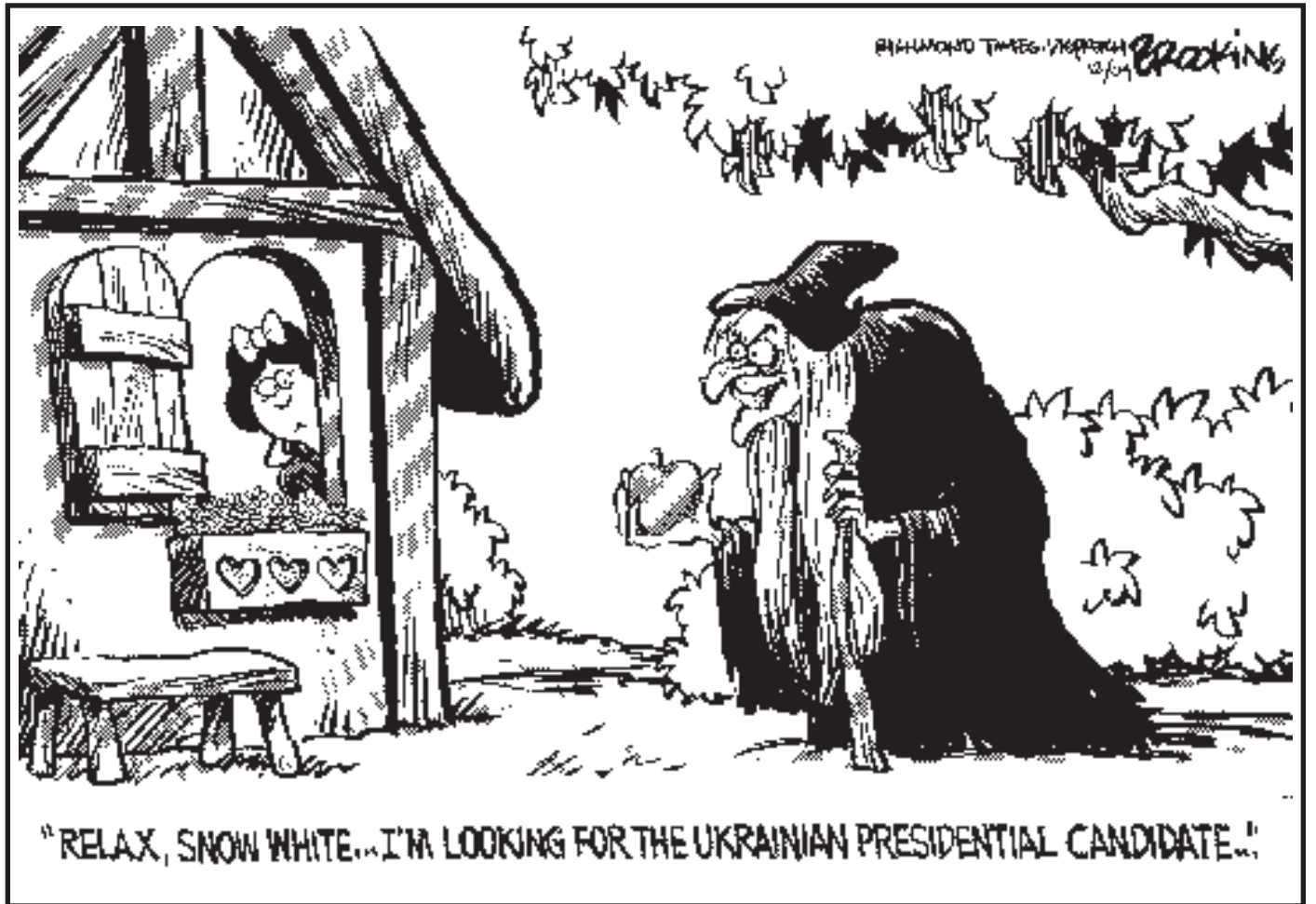
It's a foregone conclusion that Saddam and his cohorts, like the Nazis, are guilty of heinous crimes. The accomplishment of Nuremberg was to shock and re-educate the German people by creating a documentary record of the Nazi regime's crimes and atrocities. In a traumatized Iraq, trials could have a similarly cathartic effect.

The real question is whether Iraq's judges are capable of carrying out the trials. The prosecutors need to work their way through mounds of documents and carefully prepare for belligerent defendants, especially the canny Saddam, who will attempt, as much as possible, to disrupt the proceedings and turn them into a circus.

The Bush administration, which has refused to acknowledge the jurisdiction of the permanent International Criminal Court in The Hague, has asked for the help of the United Nations in assisting prosecutors and judges. U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan has disgracefully refused to help, claiming that Iraq's death penalty prevents the United Nations from participating. But that hasn't prevented the United Nations from helping to carry out judicial reform in Rwanda and Afghanistan, which have the death penalty.

Those seeking to postpone justice can always point to some logistical or political reason for putting off these trials. But given their length—the main Nuremberg war crimes trial dragged on for more than a year, and former Serbian dictator Slobodan Milosevic continues to tie up the proceedings in his trial at The Hague—Allawi is right to want to get started.

(c) 2004, Los Angeles Times



How will Bush spend his political capital?

By PHILIP KENNICOTT
THE WASHINGTON POST

President Bush could have used other metaphors to describe the opportunity his re-election gave him to pursue his agenda. He could have said that he had the wind in his sails, or a little breathing room; or that he was anticipating another honeymoon, or the chance to call in some favors. He could have talked of his legacy, his gift to the people, his place in history. Instead, he used a metaphor borrowed from the realm of finance and economics.

"Let me put it to you this way: I earned capital in the campaign, political capital, and now I intend to spend it," he said at a Nov. 4 news conference. The choice of expression is an odd one, and not just because, as some pointed out, in economic terms capital is meant to be invested, not spent.

The use of the saying also summons up the identity Bush has most assiduously avoided showing to the electorate: the capitalist and man of privilege, who has thrived not only through his own political skills but also through a mix of inherited wealth and inherited status. It doesn't call to mind the image he much prefers—the common-tongued rancher, in work boots and jeans, clearing brush on his Texas ranch.

The phrase, a cliché of politics, has flourished again since Bush used it and will probably be reiterated next month when Congress returns and takes up the president's proposals on Social Security and taxes. Chris Suellentrop, writing for the online magazine Slate, called it "the first buzzword of the second Bush administration," and noted that, far from being a slip of the blue-blooded tongue, "political capital" is an old favorite in the W lexicon. And the expression has been around for so long the ear doesn't necessarily register the literal meaning of capital—money stored away—rooted in it anymore. That Bush uses it so freely suggests how little stigma, these days, is attached to the idea of living off capital, as opposed to labor. Perhaps he'll be seen as drawing down his political 401k plan over the last four years of his political life.

Analyzing Bush's speech too closely is always a fraught business, but often a revealing one. He has the unnerving habit of seeming to speak haphazardly. Yet the same speech, scrutinized later, can appear candid and precise. Political capital is a phrase whose use could be seen in two different ways: Casual use of an old-hat expression? Or self-revelation?

Observe the embedded meanings in the phrase closely, and it is even more provocative than at first glance. Political work, the kind of work one does in elections, is all about communication, argument and persuasion. (Thrice Bush used the word "earned" in regard to his political capital.) So one definition of political capital might be the stored surplus—or goodwill—from that work, a reserve that lets a politician take action without having to do the usual "work," i.e. communicating, convincing and compromising. So was Bush saying, in effect, that he was about to start "spending," meaning taking

action, with little regard to any opposition or ill feeling? That was certainly how Democrats understood the basic message of the news conference—that he would reach out to anyone ... of like mind.

Or was Bush thinking of his political capital within more confined, Republican power circles? Was he saying that by preserving the White House for the Republicans, he felt he had a new freedom of action? It seemed as though he was saying that he did not feel indebted to certain groups—the Christian right, the McCain centrists—that claimed credit for his election. Instead, he takes their support as something owed to him.

The phrase "political capital" itself can be traced back to at least the middle of the 19th century, when it was generally used with the verb "to make." Making capital was a negative thing, equivalent to opportunism. One made capital out of an opponent's mistakes, or by manipulating the electorate on volatile issues. Race baiting and fear mongering were proven ways of "making political capital," and there was nothing honorable in this currency.

In one of the earliest uses of the phrase, an 1899 encyclopedia of American politics said that Democrats in the 1840s "made very little political capital" by trying to maneuver rival Whig Party congressmen into declaring their opposition to a war with Mexico that was popular in the South. Like many modern-day Democrats on Iraq, most Whigs opposed the war, but abstained on a war resolution and then voted to appropriate money to support U.S. troops who were in danger. Sound familiar?

William Safire's "Safire's New Political Dictionary" distinguishes the older, darker meaning of "making capital" from the more laudable meaning of "spending political capital"—that is, using one's popularity to accomplish difficult goals. And "spend" is the verb Bush chose. Safire's definition suggests an element of personal sacrifice, but it's not clear that Bush's sense of how one spends political capital involves personal sacrifice. His rhetoric, at that news conference and in the days since, suggests a more mechanistic view of the exchange: The president has gathered a kind of scrip, and he means to go shopping.

Given the increase in public debt, the spiraling costs of war in Iraq and the strictures placed on the federal budget by tax cuts, any political metaphor grounded on spending raises troubling questions. Whose capital will be spent? And to whom will the benefits of this spending redound? Who will bear the costs if Bush spends his political capital unwisely? One of the big dangers, in political rhetoric, is pronoun and metaphor slippage. When Bush speaks, in generic terms, of "a president," he generally means "me." When he speaks of "spending capital," there is a fear that he may intend a literal profligacy, with "our" capital, rather than a metaphorical sacrifice of his own.

And there may be a more fundamental slippage, in his choice of words. Political capital is the raw stuff of power, and it functions differently from other forms of capital: intellectual capital based on knowledge and wisdom, artistic capital based on prescience and

See HOW WILL on Page 12

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Saipan Tribune welcomes contributions by article, column, editorial, or op-ed that may be published in the public domain. The editor must include the name, address, and contact information of the contributor. Letters to the editor will be published as space allows, and are subject to editing. Contributions exceeding 200 words are more likely to be published. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to publish contributions or edit the right to self-publishers for length, accuracy and clarity and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions must be made in the form of a hard copy to the Saipan Tribune, P.O. Box 10000, Saipan, MP 96950. (670) 235-3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. All contributions are subject to the discretion of the editor.

X Humanity for all

Anthony Tenorio, one of the Teno/Sophia grandsons, and of late, one of CNMI Little League Baseball pitching sensations, took me to task last year when I wrote “Xmas” on our classroom chalkboard. “X” as the unknown factor in the algebraic equation, he claimed, was not a fitting designation for the Jesus Christ of his childhood piety. I explained that Chi Rho, the letters “X” and “R” in the Greek alphabet, were used by the early Byzantine Church to designate Christo Rai, Christ the King. It must have sounded lame to Anthony for he continued to protest the use of the “X” for the Christ in Christmas, and for those who knew Anthony last year, he was not then given to passionate expressions in academic pursuits or intellectual discourse. Nevertheless, his point was well taken.

This week, there was a news item about a Christian Church group in the continental U.S.A. whose clergy was asking his members to boycott commercial shops who take advantage of the season’s holiday spirit without acknowledging Christmas and its message. Scanning multicultural America’s religious celebrations and remembrances from November to January, one finds the Muslim Eid-ul-Fitr, the end of Ramadhan; the Baha’i Ascension of Abdu’l-Baha, and the Nineteenth Day; the Jewish Chanukah and the Tu B’Shevat; the Hindu-Sikh Lohri (Winter festival); the Japanese Ganjitsu (spoil the kids for a day); the Christian Christmas; the secular Boxing Day invented by the Brits; Kwanzaa of African-Americans, and the various New Year celebrations. Anyone claiming proprietary rights to this season of holidays is at best, dangerously reductive and perversely parochial.

Nor is the celebration associated with December 25 solely Christian in spirit and particularly Christian in origin. Pre-Christian Mithras of Persia (now, Iran) known as the Son of God and the Light of the World, was born this day. (When he died, he was also buried in a rock tomb, and rose again in three days.) December 25 is also the birthday of the Greek god Adonis, the Egyptian hero-king Osiris, and the gods of wine, Roman Bacchus and Greek Dionysius. It marks the Winter solstice when the sun seems to stand still in the northern hemisphere as the earth begins to tilt away from the equator. The Roman Emperor-turned-Christian Constantine worshipped the sun god, forever changing the Sabbath celebration in the Christian liturgical calendar from its Jewish origins on Saturday (Sabalu, Sabado, Sabbath) to Sunday.

The Christian Christmas does have a compelling story in the birth

narratives of Jesus. Later, the story would birth the notion that the Supreme Power of the universe deigned to appear in flesh to save the world. This has tremendous appeal to a world waiting for a Messiah. For indeed, every human being longs and hopes for something or someone external to oneself to extricate one from the vicissitudes of human existence, however that is perceived. Everyone thinks they deserve to win the sweepstakes of life, and in my case, I do the longing even if I do not purchase a lottery ticket. The yearning for a Savior is universal.

To the Christian Church’s credit, it did not call the celebration of Jesus’ alleged entry into the plane of history, Jesusmas. It called it Christmas. Now, to many, “Christ” is considered Jesus’ last name, or family name. Not so. It is the role He played, ascribed to Him by his followers. In any of the gospel narratives, He is never quoted as claiming such title to himself. Thus, it is a consensus among biblical scholars that there is one Jesus but many Christs. The early fathers of the fourth century Christian Church choose four authoritative Gospels as canon or authoritative standard of holy scripture. There were 80 some gospels floating around southern Europe, the Levant and north Africa by then. The leaders of the Church had to choose. They exercised their freedom. They made choices.

In the last century, the quest for the historical Jesus revealed that each picture of the Christ is conditioned by the culture of the perceiver. It is in the eye of the beholder. Thus, a Bolivian Jesus Christ is depicted, not only in physique but also in emotions and thoughts, to be Andean Latino. The same would be said of the Jesus Christ image originating from Shanghai to Sri Lanka, Tokyo to Timbuktu, Manila to Milan, from the wadi of the Memphis by the Nile to the suburbs of Indianapolis.

The current popular image of Jesus as the Christ is that of a meek Clark Kent who would turn into the S-T-shirted Cristo Rei on Easter morn. Not unlike the capsule-carried child from Krypton, the Jesus of Bethlehem of gospel myth was also heaven sent through a human medium though by the mysterious means of dessert wind. I caricature the image, but it is fundamentally the evangelium of the last two centuries of missionary work.

Images that we choose of Jesus are the images we choose for ourselves. Reflected by the looking glass of Jesus Christ, we discover the deep images that we harbor for ourselves. Some have seen darkness, desolation and terror while others encountered light, transformation,

By **JAIME VERGARA**

Vergara is a Social Studies 6th grade teacher at San Vicente Elementary School and writes a regular column for the Saipan Tribune.



and possibilities. My favorite is John’s witness of Jesus confronting an ill person lying by the Sheep Gate pool of Beth-zatha. Jesus asked: “Do you want to be made well?” The sick man replied that each time he makes his way to the stirring and healing waters of the pool, someone else steps in front of him. No one helps him to get ahead. Jesus said to him: “Stand up, take your mat, and walk.”

The Jesus of my acquaintance is a no-Messiah Messiah. He goes around asking, “Are you waiting for someone to relieve you of your troubles? Like, a son of David to drive the Romans out for you? Well, I have good news for you. No one is coming. Pick up your life, and walk.” It is as if the Christ role is fundamentally to affirm the humanity of everyone, to invite each to appropriate their heritage of who they are, embracing their nature and nurture as truly their own. Miraculously, those who do pick up their lives and walk, graciously journey into a life of fulfilling self-expenditure into the glorious end of their years. What is common about the Jesus Christ story of the Christian gospels is the affirmation that one’s humanity is worth living, enough that the creator, preserver and destroyer of it, in the fullness of time, came to be unconditionally and truly one, also.

In one sense, Anthony was right in insisting that the “X” in our Christmas be made specific and not left to the vagaries of the unknown. It would be limiting, inauthentic, and downright unchristian, however, to think that the Christ of my tradition and imaginings is the only right and appropriate one.

As Gandhi once declared to a Hindu fanatic who objected to his dealings with the Muslims: “I am a Muslim, and a Hindu, and a Christian, and a Jew.” The Christ in my Christmas is a role for anyone, one that affirms, consecrates, dedicates and celebrates what is human.

Letter to the Editor

Will relinquishing La Fiesta maintain WASC accreditation?

Approximately two months after Hotel Nikko Saipan sold the La Fiesta property to Cocos Lagoon Development Corporation (CLDC) based in Guam in May 2002, the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents hired Kenneth Wright to be president. At the onset of his presidency, the college was beset with a deficit that was nearly \$1 million. As newly appointed president, Wright said that the college would be able to turn things around via the Pacific Gateway project and a reorganization of the college. A projection of nearly 500 foreign students was made that would presumably realize the college revenues in the millions. As it turned out, the Pacific Gateway project was not realistic and the planning for it was not based on credible research, which should have been conducted in the first place.

When Tony Leon Guerrero took over the reigns as NMC president in March 2004, he adjusted the projection established by Wright for the foreign students involved with Pacific Gateway project from 470 to a mere 30. Although the adjusted projection appeared to be realistic and achievable, it should have never been made while the college was not in a very good fiscal disposition and on the brink of losing accreditation with WASC.

Within two months of his presidency, Wright fired 11 staff members and proclaimed that it would pare down the NMC’s deficit to the tune of \$588,000. At the end of NMC’s Fiscal Year 2002-2003 which ended on September 30, 2003, it became apparent that what Wright proclaimed NMC would save never happened and the deficit had increased to \$1.5 million.

Several months before Wright was hired as NMC president, the La Fiesta Mall manager Hideo Nishigori told the media in February 2002 that the “outlook for the La Fiesta is good”. At that time there were roughly two-dozen businesses in the mall. Approximately two years later in February 2004, the number of businesses occupying the La Fiesta Mall complex had fallen to less than a half dozen. The occupation of businesses currently is minimal at best and the foot traffic for tourists who visit the CNMI and/or the island community residents is at an all time low. The description

by some journalists in the island community of the mall being a “white elephant” is indeed very accurate.

In November of 2003, the CNMI Legislature did not approve NMC’s request for more appropriations to help them eradicate a deficit that had increased to an unmanageable level. Consequently, they denied the BOR approximately \$1.5 million. With a deficit of \$1.5 million, the appropriations reduction placed the college in a precarious position simply because they had no financial resources to remove themselves from the fiscal quagmire they were embedded in. NMC went into their new fiscal year 2003-2004 with some major concerns regarding their unstable financial situation.

Wright told the media in November 2003 that “NMC was out of their financial mess”. His proclamation was clearly not a true reflection of what the real fiscal picture was regarding NMC. When it became evident three months later the revelation the college was in some serious fiscal trouble, the pressure on Wright became intense and he was compelled to submit his resignation to the BOR in February 2004. Shortly thereafter, NMC went into a “fiscal tailspin” which led to the BOR making a decision to shutdown the La Fiesta Mall due to not having the fiscal resources to maintain it and meet the annual lease obligation, which was due at the onset of the new fiscal year in October 2004.

Approximately one year after Wright made the above proclamation to the media; Tony Leon Guerrero told the media on December 13, 2004, that the \$1.4 million dollar deficit for the college was cleared. Leon Guerrero’s comment: “We turned around a minus \$1.4 million” appears to be a description of the amount of money NMC would have been obligated to put up each year for La Fiesta, i.e., \$600,000 in operating expenses and the \$200,000 annual lease payment plus interest, but does not reflect the overall institutional deficit that reached nearly \$2 million at the end of the college’s fiscal year 2003-2004 which ended on September 30, 2004.

The issue now is the institutional deficit that rose to nearly \$2 million and began to accumulate in 2001 prior to Kenneth Wright taking on the leadership reigns of NMC. If this deficit has not been

totally eradicated, then cutting loose the fiscal responsibilities for La Fiesta might not be good enough to maintain accreditation. Since the college had virtually no resources at the end of fiscal year 2003-2004 which ended on September 30, 2004, then the only way the deficit could have been eradicated would be if the governor forwarded the funds to the college. If the governor did this without the knowledge or blessing of the CNMI Legislature, then there might be some issues raised.

The WASC team that visited NMC in October 2004 to make an assessment in terms of whether or not the institution should have the warning removed regarding financial instability, as well as whether or not the college was adhering to important and established educational standards. The decision they make will be made public subsequent to their next scheduled meeting sometime in 2005. We will soon find out if WASC believes NMC is fiscally healthy enough to maintain their accreditation standards.

If WASC does not remove the warning, then it will be imperative for NMC to look carefully at how to meet the established criteria for accreditation in a timely fashion. To not do this would take away the prospect of providing the students in the island community an opportunity to pursue a two-year degree, as well as the option to transfer to an accredited college or university for a baccalaureate and/or graduate degree.

If WASC should remove the warning for NMC and allow accreditation to be maintained, then it would be a strong indicator that the college is presumably in fairly good shape fiscally and meeting the criteria expected of accredited institutions of higher education. And if this is the case, then it would be a good time for the leadership of NMC to begin generating a fiscal reserve and work towards maintaining stability so that the future for the students of the island community will not only be bright, but secure as well.

Dr. Jesus D. Camacho

Delano, California

HOW WILL

From Page 11

vision, and ultimately, moral capital, based on reliability and trust. Political capital has no inherent virtue. These other forms of metaphorical capital, as well as the financial sort, require verbs that bring with them a sense of collective responsibility: to conserve, to protect, to bequeath, to transfer, to manage. A politician gathers and risks his own capital; a scientist, or musician, or member of the clergy, even a financial adviser, also risks the collective capital of his or her profession.

Before he entered politics, during his years in business, Bush's ability to manage capital—the ordinary sort, measured in dollars and cents—was

undistinguished. Indeed, Bush's business career was built almost entirely on political capital borrowed from his father. Bush brought very little capital of any other sort to the table. Even Bush's earlier political career drew on his father's good name and credit.

And while he would like to argue that this last election is a mark of voter trust—hence moral capital—it is a trust felt by a bare majority of the electorate, and softened by a good deal of concern, even among some of his supporters, about how he has handled the economy and the war.

Bush has arrived at his second term at a time in American history when moral and intellectual and artistic capital may be at historic lows—in part because he and his political supporters

have devalued them. Cultural elites are mocked; dissenting academics are marginalized; scientists bearing facts that are troublesome to policy-makers are decried or ignored. Democrats, analyzing what went wrong in the last election, might try out this thesis: Bush and his supporters went after John Kerry's moral and intellectual capital, attacking precisely those things—service to his country, intellect—that Kerry might have thought was money in the bank.

Bush is not solely responsible for this trend, but he has used it to his advantage. We end up with what might be called the Colin Powell effect—people with great moral capital are afraid to use it—or the Walter Cronkite phenomenon—people find that the moment they try to trade on their moral

capital, it's suddenly worthless. If you're not loaded with political capital, you might as well be Oprah Winfrey, the most electable woman in America so long as she never runs for office.

A society that respects only political capital ends up with cynical leadership. If you can undermine trust, which is the basis of all currencies, you are left with only the raw power that flows from wealth and public office.

It is in this impoverished environment that Bush will shop for a legacy. If the term "spending political capital" sounded ominous to some ears, perhaps it's because it suggests that there may be no intention to leave a legacy in the traditional sense—a gift to posterity, shared by all—but rather a long "spending down" that enriches

only a few. Perhaps Bush was using the phrase in the positive sense, as defined by Safire, and will spend from his personal political assets for the public gain. But for a moment, if you studied the swagger and the triumphal tone of voice, it felt more like Bush had just won a round of "Wheel of Fortune" and was ready for his buying spree.

In a flash you saw a sobering possibility. When he said he had political capital and he meant to spend it, he meant just that. The atmosphere of his press conference was light, even jovial, with a touch of defiance. And yet he had attained power without trust, victory without consensus, "capital" without "wealth."

Philip Kennicott, a Style staff writer, is The Washington Post's culture critic.

Righting misconceptions about Azmar and Pagan

First, I would like to say that I am a friend of Mr. Don Farrell, and that I am an acquaintance of Dr. Thomas Arkle. With Tinian being such a small place, it would have been almost impossible for me to not meet them during the 15 years that I have lived here. Furthermore, I have not been asked by either of them to write this letter, and I am not in the pay of Azmar (I sort of wish I were, as I could use the extra money during this time of year.). I am writing this letter in an effort to be fair, and to correct some misconceptions that I read in Mr. Peter J. Pangelinan Perez’s letter.

As for my qualifications, I received a bachelor’s degree from the University of California, Berkeley, in Conservation of Natural Resources. I hold a master degree in Instructional Technology from the University of Southern Mississippi at Hattiesburg. I co-authored the first edition of “Island Ecology” with Mr. John Fury, who has greatly expanded this book into the current edition he is now editing. I have taught the Natural History of the Mariana Islands and Natural Resources Management courses at the Tinian extension of NMC. I do understand what natural resources are available here in the Mariana Islands and the importance of their conservation.

First, Mr. Perez is correct that public lands are held in trust for all the people of CNMI descent. The original Constitution of the CNMI established the Marianas Public Land Corporation (MPLC) to manage the CNMI public lands. The members of the board of the Marianas Public Land Authority (the successor of the MPLC) are of CNMI descent, and manage public lands for all the people of CNMI descent. Mr. Perez seems to imply that all the people of CNMI descent should vote on every issue that involves public lands. The Constitution does not agree with Mr. Perez, and his implied view would stop all development on public lands in the CNMI. A vote of all the people of CNMI descent would be needed for all development projects involving public land.

PaganWatch amends requests

Dear chairwoman and director,

Due to the MPLA Board’s rejection of the Azmar application, it was decided that our earlier and original request for documents should be amended to reflect the current state of affairs. Accordingly, and pursuant to the Open Government Act (1 CMC 9917), this office hereby amends its earlier request and instead requests that the following public records be made available for inspection within 10 days of this request:

All public records relating to, and including, the mining permits, leases, licenses and other agreements between MPLA (and its predecessors) and JG Sablan (and its assignees and affiliates) including, but not limited to, all compliance and inspection reports, staff recommendations, board minutes and agendas including items or conversations about JG Sablan, letters of default and notices of violation, amendments, correspondence,

This would be a very slow and expensive process. That is why we have representatives to make the day-to-day decisions of government for us.

Now down to Azmar’s development proposal for Pagan. Mr. Perez states that it “was extremely one-sided and amounted to gross exploitation.” Most business deals are usually one-sided. The investors must make a profit, but at the same time, they are taking all of the risk. The CNMI government and people were not the ones taking the risk in this mining proposal; they would have only benefited from it. Does the CNMI government have the millions, if not hundreds of millions, of dollars needed to develop Pagan and ship the pozzolan to its buyers? In this time of economic hardships, I don’t believe the government would be able to find the money necessary to develop the resources on Pagan without help. Also, it must be remembered that the economy will not be improving in the near future, especially when the textile tariffs are removed and the textile factors close in the CNMI.

As for the list of documents that the MPLA wanted from Azmar, one of them was a list of its buyers. If this list were turned over, what would stop others from negotiating with Azmar’s buyers and undercutting its deal? Don’t tell me that MPLA could keep the names of the buyers secret. Nothing in government remains a secret for long, especially on these small islands we live. In addition, has MPLA ever asked any other developers who their buyers or customers would be? By the way, did MPLA ask J.G. Sablan Construction & Quarry Company who its buyers were when this company was issued a mining permit for Pagan? As for the required list of documents, I don’t think the whole truth about this has come out yet, concerning what documents were or were not required.

Next, Mr. Perez says that Azmar was only going on hearsay about the pozzolan deposits on Pagan. It is my understand-

ing that they were using two reports from noted institutions of learning and science. This doesn’t sound like hearsay to me. Would someone be willing to invest millions of dollars on hearsay? I think Mr. Moore is a lot smarter than that.

One of the criticisms expressed about Mr. Moore has been that he has never run a mining company. I have to honestly say that I do not know Mr. Moore, or his background, but I have been led to understand that he does know international financing and how to create successful companies. Most CEOs and directors of large companies

don’t know all the details of what their companies are doing. Would you expect the CEO of General Motors to know how to make the thousands of products that it manufactures? They rely on experts for the details, as I feel, Mr. Moore would have in his pozzolan mining venture.

Mr. Perez and PaganWatch keep saying that Pagan is a beautiful pristine island. Have any of them visited Pagan? I was there in 1993 for four days. Yes, about half of Pagan is one of the most beautiful places that I have ever visited. The other part of the island I found to be a lava and ash field, with little growing on

it besides some stunted grass and *tangantangan* in sheltered areas. In the open areas, there was nothing because the ash kept burying it. Yes, the volcano was still having minor eruptions when I was there. The area proposed for mining is not the beautiful pristine part of Pagan that is always being described by Mr. Perez and other members of PaganWatch.

Yes, Mr. Perez is right. There is a problem with how MPLA issues permits. They need to set clear guidelines and procedures. They need to have better communications among the board members and with their staff. Once the problems with how the MPLA

board makes decisions is fixed, a fair and unbiased process can be followed by all that want to use public lands to enrich the people of CNMI descent.

Should Azmar have gotten the mining permit? I really don’t know since I have not seen any of the information that they have submitted, or been privy to any of the discussions about Azmar’s permit. I just know that the CNMI has a valuable resource that should be developed in a responsible matter.

Howard Cole
Marpo Valley
Tinian, MP

MOBIL

F. Matthew Smith
Attorney at Law

Nation

Kan. woman said to show off stolen baby

MELVERN, Kan. (AP)—A woman charged with killing an expectant mother and cutting the baby from her womb was showing the child off to people at a café and to her pastor hours before she was arrested, residents said Saturday.

Lisa M. Montgomery, 36, was charged Friday with kidnapping resulting in murder and was expected to appear in federal court Monday. The baby, whose mother had been eight months pregnant, was in good condition.

Hours before her arrest, Montgomery and her husband showed off a newborn girl at a restaurant, said Kathy Sage, owner of the

Whistle Stop Café in Melvern, a small eastern Kansas town.

Many customers were surprised to hear the infant was showing the child off to people at a café and to her pastor hours before she was arrested, residents said Saturday.

"You read about this stuff," she said. "It blows you away when it's here. This stuff is supposed to be in New York City or Los Angeles."

Montgomery was arrested later in the death of Bobbie Jo Stinnett, who was found Thursday in a

pool of blood inside her small white home in the northwest Missouri town of Skidmore.

Montgomery's husband, Kevin, has not been charged in the case.

Authorities said Lisa Montgomery contacted Stinnett through an online message board, and investigators zeroed in on her using computer forensics. Montgomery was seeking to buy a dog from Stinnett, who raised rat terriers.

While Montgomery ate breakfast, another customer showed the baby off around the café. After eating, they took the girl to visit their pastor.

"It was a beautiful baby," Mike Wheatley said. "Absolutely beautiful."

Wheatley and his wife commented that the baby, whom the couple called Abigail, did not look like a newborn because her head was not misshapen from passing through the birth canal, a common result of childbirth that soon goes away. The only marks she had were a small scratch on her head and a slight bruise on her hand.

The pastor had not seen the couple since October, and everyone in the congregation expected her to give birth around Dec. 12.

U.S. Attorney Todd Graves said Lisa Montgomery contacted Stinnett through an online message board after seeing a Web site about the rat terriers Stinnett bred and raised. The site included a picture of Stinnett, showing she was pregnant.

Investigators searched Stinnett's computer and found the victim had been communicating through the message board with someone claiming to be a Darlene Fischer who lived north of Fairfax, Mo.

Authorities, helped by a North



AP

This is an undated photo showing Lisa M. Montgomery, a resident of Melvern, Kan. Montgomery was arrested late Friday, Dec. 17, 2004, and charged with kidnapping resulting in death in a case of a woman being murdered and her 8-month-old fetus cut out of her womb.

Carolina dog breeder who was familiar with the message board, determined the communication from Fischer actually came from Montgomery's house.

The Montgomerys were taken in for questioning Friday, and Lisa Montgomery was charged. Investigators said she confessed to the crimes.

Dems want answers from Rumsfeld on armor

CHICAGO (AP)—The incoming deputy leader of Senate Democrats demanded answers Saturday from Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld as to why U.S. soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan lack protective equipment for themselves and their vehicles.

"We can, and we should, armor every Humvee and every truck our troops use in Iraq and Afghanistan," Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., said in his party's weekly radio address. "No more excuses, no more delays. We can save hundreds of lives and prevent thousands of serious injuries."

Congress has given the Bush administration all the defense spending it has requested, yet there are still 3,500 Humvees without protective armor and about 44,000 soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan without ade-

quate body armor, Durbin said.

"The Pentagon says the lack of protective equipment is a matter of 'logistics,'" Durbin said. "No, it's not. It's a matter of leadership."

Durbin said Rumsfeld ignored warnings from top military experts that success in Iraq would require far more troops and that they were likely to meet strong resistance.

"Those responsible for planning this war were not prepared for the reality on the ground, and many of our soldiers have paid the price," said Durbin, who will become the Senate's minority whip in the new Congress next month.

Durbin said the "most valuable gift" America's troops received this holiday season may be a soldier's question to Rums-

feld at a town-hall meeting in Kuwait this month about why American soldiers in Kuwait and Iraq scavenge in junk piles for steel plates to protect their Humvees and trucks.

"It's a question a lot of us have been asking for some time now," the senator said.

"Secretary Rumsfeld, we have the Army we want. Now let's give them the equipment they need," he said.

An increasing number of Republicans have joined Democrats in criticizing the lack of armor and other aspects of Rumsfeld's conduct of the war. The secretary, however, drew support Friday from the Senate's top two GOP officials, Majority Leader Bill Frist of Tennessee and Whip Mitch McConnell of Kentucky.

Group tactics split church abuse victims

CORONA, Calif. (AP)—The leafletting outside St. Matthew Catholic Church started well on a recent Sunday, with some parishioners accepting the brochures about clergy abuse being handed out by people who said they were abused by priests.

Then one woman standing on a church balcony screamed at the demonstrators "You're evil!" and a man made an obscene gesture at them. The parish called police, who told the protesters they couldn't leaflet without a city permit.

The angry reaction came as

no surprise to members of the Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests, or SNAP. Since the sexual abuse scandal in the U.S. Roman Catholic church blew up in 2002, SNAP has often stepped forward to speak for victims.

While many victims have embraced SNAP as a support group and a means to win long-overdue justice, the group's tactics have alienated other Catholics and even some of the very people it hopes to help.

Some abuse victims say the group is too angry and confron-

tational, while others insist it's not activist enough. Still others fault SNAP for its financial relationship with clergy abuse attorneys, saying the link fuels perceptions that victims are only after the church's money.

The attitudes reflect deep divisions among victims over how to proceed now that the first wave of the scandal has subsided. The question has profound significance for victims, many of whom will never see their molesters prosecuted because of statutes of limitations.

JOETEN MOTORS
+BLUE

Asia

Musharraf to detail status in address

KARACHI, Pakistan (AP)—President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, who has reneged on his promise to step down as chief of the army by year’s end, said he would address the nation soon to explain the decision.

In an interview late Friday with a Pakistani television station, Musharraf set no date for the nationwide address. The president’s supporters in parliament passed a law allowing him to stay on in both posts through 2007 while Musharraf was on a trip to Latin America, Washington and Europe earlier this

month. Musharraf told reporters in London and Paris that he had made up his mind to stay on in both roles.

“I will remain in uniform,” Musharraf said in an interview with Pakistan’s Kawish Television Network in the southern city of Karachi.

“I will speak to the nation in a few days and tell them some reasons, and tell them the truth,” he said. “We will speak of the future, where we are standing, where we came from, where we have reached and where we have to go.”

In Paris, Musharraf said “yes” when asked whether he would continue as Pakistan’s army chief and as head of state.

Critics say the move will slow Pakistan’s return to democracy following the general’s bloodless 1999 coup. But the international community, particularly Washington, have been mostly silent on Musharraf’s decision.

Under Musharraf, Pakistan has become a key ally of the United States in its war against terrorism, particularly in neighboring Afghanistan. Osama bin Laden is believed hiding in the

rugged mountains bordering the two countries.

Musharraf has said his decision to renege on his promise will ensure stability in government policies including his support of the U.S.-led war against terrorism.

The alliance, which made stunning gains in parliamentary elections in 2002 mainly on a platform of opposition to the U.S.-led campaign in neighboring Afghanistan, has scheduled to hold the latest in a series of rallies against Musharraf on Sunday in Rawalpindi, a city near Islamabad.



Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, left, thanks U.S. Marine Brig. Gen. Kenneth Glueck of the Joint Task Force 535 during the ceremony ending the U.S. relief and humanitarian operation Saturday, Dec. 18, 2004 at Villamor Air Base in Manila, Philippines.

US military wraps up Philippines relief

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippines thanked the U.S. military on Saturday for its help after storms and typhoons left more than 1,000 people dead and at least 550 missing.

At least 900 American troops backed by 13 helicopters and C-130 cargo planes were deployed to the devastated northeast, U.S. Ambassador Francis Ricciardone said at a ceremony to end the relief mission.

The operation cost \$7 million, the U.S. Embassy said in a statement. The military also donated \$1 million in tents, generators, medical supplies and water containers.

The U.S. government contributed \$500,000 through the Philippine Red Cross and nongovernment organizations, Ricciardone said.

“I commend you as I commend the soldiers of our own

armed forces who crossed the perilous plains and mountains on foot, wading in strong currents to save the people from hunger and death,” President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo said.

Ricciardone said future U.S. assistance will go to improving the management of the Philippines’ forest and coastal resources.

“You simply must succeed in your programs, before you irremediably lose your forest and fisheries to greed, ignorance, criminality and the pressures of an ever-expanding population,” he said.

Officials blamed excessive logging for the floods and landslides triggered by four successive typhoons and tropical storms in November and early this month.

Civil defense officials said 1,062 people died and 552 are still missing.

US warns of attacks in Indonesia

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—The State Department on Saturday warned that terrorists were planning more attacks against Western targets in Indonesia over Christmas and New Years, reiterating advice to its citizens not to travel to the country.

The State Department’s warning follows similar alarms sounded by other foreign governments earlier this week that militants belonging to the al-Qaida-linked Jemaah Islamiyah terror group were plotting more bombings.

Falling object said seen near Jakarta

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Witnesses reported seeing a falling object with a tail of fire careering toward earth close to Jakarta early Sunday, before a loud explosion was heard in several districts.

There were no reports of injuries.

Indonesian air force radar detected an unidentified object falling toward the earth at a great speed before disappearing at

“The department reminds Americans that the terrorist threat in Indonesia continues and may increase over the December-January holiday period,” the State Department said on its Web site. “Reports indicate that terrorists are planning attacks against a wide variety of targets.”

Jemaah Islamiyah has been blamed for three terror attacks in Indonesia in the past two years, including the 2002 Bali nightclub bombings in which 202 people were killed, seven of them Americans.

around the same time as the noise was heard, a military spokesman said on condition of anonymity.

Media reports said an object that might have been a meteor was seen flashing across the sky above the capital, but did not make clear if it had hit the earth.

Several callers to el-Shinta radio station reported a noise that sounded like an explosion at around 7:30 a.m. in western Jakarta.

BOG JOLIDAY CASH

World

Saddam's top henchmen face Iraq tribunal

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP)—The former general known as “Chemical Ali,” notorious for allegedly gassing thousands of Kurds, looked haggard and leaned on a cane in a court as Iraq’s U.S.-backed government speeded the pace of legal proceedings against Saddam Hussein’s henchmen before next month’s critical elections.

The appearance Saturday of both Ali Hassan al-Majid and Saddam’s last defense minister Gen. Sultan Hashim Ahmad before a tribunal of judges were the first in a series of interrogatory hearings that were made public, in preparation for even-

tual full trials of Iraq’s one-time leaders. The session was closed to the press.

Al-Majid appeared haggard in a video released after the interrogation. The gray-haired first cousin of Saddam leaned on a walking stick before sitting in front of a judge behind a desk.

Ahmad stared blankly at the ground as police officers stood on either side of him holding his arms. Ahmad, a thickly set man with black mustache, later smiled broadly to others in the hearing room.

A defense lawyer who attended the hearings said Ahmad spent four hours at the tribunal,

with the questions focused on charges regarding attacks on Kurds and the Anfal campaign, a depopulation scheme that killed and expelled hundreds of thousands of Kurds from northern Iraq during the 1980s. Ahmad is said to have led the Iraqi Army’s 1st Corps into the Anfal campaign.

“I have been a military officer for 40 years and have never been punished. It’s unfortunate that I have to sit like this before the court with the Americans sitting behind me,” Ahmad told the judge, according to the lawyer, who declined to be identified.



In this image released by the Iraqi Special Tribunal, Ali Hassan al-Majid, known as ‘Chemical Ali’ sits prior to his preliminary investigative hearing at an undisclosed courtroom in Baghdad, Iraq Saturday.

U.S. Embassy spokesman Bob Callahan declined to say if American officials were present.

Interim Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi said Tuesday that detained Saddam regime figures would start appearing before court in the coming week—pressing ahead with the trials ahead of crucial national elections set for Jan. 30.

The timing was apparently to remind voters of the brutality they endured before the Americans ousted the dictatorship. The Iraqis will vote for a transitional assembly that will write a permanent constitution.

Armed civilians attack UN peacekeepers

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Bands of former soldiers and armed residents looted police arsenals, set bonfires and fired shots into the air amid escalating chaos in this impoverished Caribbean nation.

On Saturday, armed civilians set the bonfires of tires to block a road in the southwestern town of Petit Goave, a day after they shot into the air and hurled stones at Sri Lankan peacekeepers who tried to

wrest control of a police station from rebels.

The U.N. troops were forced to retreat, said Elisee Sincere, a reporter with local Radio Vision 2000 who witnessed the confrontation. U.N. officials could not immediately be reached for comment, and it was unclear if anyone was hurt.

The Sri Lankan troops managed to gain control of another police station in the outskirts of the city, where rebels had resisted, Sincere said.

Petit Goave is one of several provincial towns still under control of rebels who ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in February and who are refusing to lay down their weapons. The rebels include members of the army which first overthrew Aristide in 1991 as well as convicted criminals and others accused of killings, rapes and torture under the 1991-1994 military regime before Aristide returned to power and disbanded the army.

Official denies poisoning Yushchenko

KIEV, Ukraine (AP)—Supporters of Ukrainian presidential candidate Viktor Yushchenko reconsidered plans to travel to his opponent’s eastern stronghold after a tense standoff, and a U.S. congressional delegation arrived in Ukraine Saturday to press for fairness in the Dec. 26 runoff election.

Meanwhile, a top security agency official whose house was pinpointed by Yushchenko as the probable site of his poisoning denied any involvement in slipping the opposition leader a dose of the toxic chemical dioxin.

Dozens of angry ethnic Russian supporters of Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich staged a blockade late Friday as the convoy—some 50 cars draped with Yushchenko’s orange colors and carrying mostly artists and musicians touring the country to campaign for the opposition leader—sought to cross onto the Crimean peninsula, said convoy coordinator Olga Khodovanets.

Yushchenko’s backers then traveled on to the Crimean capital Simferopol, where they showed videos and photos of the massive opposition protests

that swept the capital Kiev for two weeks after Yanukovich, Ukraine’s Prime Minister, was declared the winner of the first runoff vote on Nov. 21.

Yushchenko won a Supreme Court ruling that threw out results of that election because of fraud and ordered a repeat vote Dec. 26.

The convoy, with about 150 people, is traveling around this France-sized nation of 48 million trying to sow support for Yushchenko in eastern and southern regions where Yanukovich received more votes.

Sudan keeps up attacks on Darfur rebels

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP)—Sudan’s government kept up attacks on rebels in Darfur on Saturday, defying a deadline set by African Union mediators for an end to active hostilities, AU officials said.

AU mediators at peace talks being held in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, gave Sudan and rebel delegates a 24-hour ultimatum Friday to stop fighting by 6 p.m. Saturday or face possible referral to the U.N. Security Council.

AU officials said the government continued attacks.

AU spokesman Assane Ba told reporters government helicopters were attacking the town of Labado. But Sudan’s government claimed it was defending against an insurgent offensive.

“What the government is doing in these areas is actually within its sovereign rights,” Sudan’s Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Najib Abdulwahab said in a statement issued by Sudan’s embassy in Nigeria.

Ba said the AU mediators would ask Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, current head of the 52-nation African Union, to personally intervene in the current round of Darfur peace talks.

NMC PROC



Pinochet hospitalized after stroke

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP)—Gen. Augusto Pinochet was hospitalized after suffering a stroke Saturday, one day after an appeals court delayed a decision on whether to uphold the former dictator’s indictment and house arrest on human rights charges.

Doctors say Pinochet has suffered several minor strokes since 1998. The 89-year-old former ruler also has mild dementia, diabetes and arthritis, and uses a pacemaker.

On Friday, the Santiago Court of Appeals postponed until next week a decision on whether to uphold his indictment and house arrest for the alleged kidnapping of nine dissidents and the killing of one of them during his 1973-90 military regime.

Pinochet’s health problems rescued him from trial three years ago on other charges.

“Gen. Pinochet suffered a new brain

vascular accident with loss of consciousness,” Santiago’s Army Hospital said in a communique Saturday. He has developed moving and neurological problems, “but he has evolved with stable vital signs,” the hospital said.

Pinochet’s spokesman, retired Gen. Guillermo Garin, said the former ruler was rushed to the hospital after “he felt bad during breakfast—as if he would faint, and doctors decided to take him to the hospital.”

Pinochet’s motorcade entered the hospital in the upscale Providencia district under heavy guard. Minutes later, his wife, Lucia Hiriart, and army commander Gen. Emilio Cheyre also entered, along with several other Pinochet relatives.

Joke text message triggers terror alert

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—An Italian tourist aboard a flight from Sydney to Vienna caused an international security alert after he sent a joke text message from his cell phone to his wife claiming his plane had been hijacked by terrorists, the Australian

government confirmed Sunday.

The man, Antonio Casale, 35, sent the message to his wife from Kuala Lumpur during a refueling stop on a Lauda Air flight from Sydney last Sunday night, Sydney’s Sunday Telegraph newspaper reported.

Transport Minister John Anderson’s spokesman confirmed the newspaper report.

Casale claimed terrorists were in control of the plane and were taking the passengers to an unknown destination.

His distressed wife contacted Italian police, who immediately contacted the Italian embassy in Canberra, who in turn contacted Australian Federal Police.

Anderson’s spokesman said authorities were able to quickly establish Casale’s identity and discover the message was a hoax.

The pilot was reportedly contacted while in flight by counterterrorism negotiators, who found him oblivious to any hijacking attempt.

“The Italian police picked up on it, then the Italian embassy, the Australian Federal Police came in on it and it was quite a big operation,” Ander-

son’s spokesman said on condition of anonymity.

“Federal police and other authorities over here have got enough on their plate without having to worry about stupidity like this as well,” he added.

Belgium honors battle of the Bulge vets

BASTOGNE, Belgium (AP)—Amid snow flurries and a chilling wind, Belgium’s King Albert II honored U.S. soldiers who died fighting Nazi Germany 60 years ago in the Battle of the Bulge, the largest land battle for American forces in war.

Veterans from across the United States returned Saturday to find this market town that was at the center of the fighting much as it was on that bitter cold December in 1944—covered in snow and buffeted by wind.

The old soldiers, wearing military berets and caps, were greeted with warm applause, hugs and kisses from a grateful crowd that lined the streets.

“I’m very happy to see so many people come out for this event,” said

Miasy Dumont, 68, from nearby Ludelange, Luxembourg. “This is the last time I’m sure. In 10 years there will be no more veterans.”

The king, joined by Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert, R-Ill, led a commemoration and laid wreaths at the vast Mardasson memorial on the edge of town. The ceremony paid homage to the 19,000 American soldiers killed and about 61,000 wounded in the largest land battle for U.S. forces in World War II. The fighting also claimed 120,000 German lives.

“All soldiers memorialized at this monument are part of the greatest generation,” said U.S. Gen. James L. Jones, Supreme Allied Commander in Europe.

After the half-hour ceremony which included a U.S. honor guard from the 101st Airborne Division from Fort Campbell, Kentucky, veterans were driven by bus from the towering memorial back to the center of town.

Once there, they again enjoyed warm applause from crowds lining the main street to the town square and attended a sound and light show and a parade of World War II vehicles.

PSS JVA

PSS JVA

Health & Fitness

A better measure of true happiness

By SHARI ROAN
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Ask the question, "How are you doing?" and you're likely to get some sort of general answer: "OK." "Not so good." "Fine."

That's a problem for researchers whose job it is to precisely gauge well-being. Measures of life satisfaction, or—as it's commonly called—happiness, are an essential part of many psychological studies and are increasingly used in medical studies and even economic research. But many scientists say they don't have a good grasp of how well individuals—or the nation as a whole—are doing at any given time.

Now, in what may be the most authoritative way to determine well-being, researchers reporting in the journal *Science* say they have devised an accurate scale. The method works, they say, because people are asked to assess their feelings throughout the course of a single day, not to simply reflect at a specific point in time on their overall happiness.

An initial test conducted on women has already produced some interesting findings

about how satisfied Americans may truthfully be. Contrary to what people may acknowledge, it turns out that many dislike spending time with their boss, find caring for their children not very pleasurable and truly enjoy watching television.

"We're trying to find out what people are really experiencing. And that may be different than their beliefs," says Arthur Stone, vice chairman of the department of psychiatry at Stony Brook University and one of the paper's authors.

For example, Stone says, researchers often ask questions such as: "Taken altogether, how satisfied are you currently with your life?" But, he says, "People don't run around with an answer in their head. They have to think about that. It's a difficult question. And compared to who? It's that difference between going from that sort of global question to the specific that we think is a major advance here."

The new measurement tool, called the Day Reconstruction Method, asks people to construct a short diary of their previous day. Participants are prompted to write down what they did, when they did it, who they were with and how they felt.

This approach is designed to reflect how moods and feelings of satisfaction change throughout the day depending on what people are doing, says Richard M. Suzman, associate director of the National Institute on Aging, which helped fund the research.

"People often have a general impression that is very global and may be quite at variance with their minute-to-minute or hour-to-hour experience," he says. The Day Reconstruction Method "is much more representative of people's actual work and life experience than one might get by asking a general question such as: Are you happy or satisfied?"

A trial of the method appears to bear that out. In a study of 909 employed women, researchers found that some results differed from what research has traditionally suggested.

For example, previous studies have found that when asked about activities they find most enjoyable, people often list interactions with their children at the top of the list. People also often mention being with friends and working at one's job as enjoyable.

But Stone and his colleagues found that taking care of children was ranked as one of the least enjoyable activities—right alongside working, housework and commuting. People may love their kids and look back on child-

rearing with fond memories, but the hour-to-hour experience of raising children may produce less positive feelings, Stone says.

The measurement tool also showed the extent to which feeling pressured for time and a lack of control erodes satisfaction with one's job. Sleep quality also had a big effect on mood and enjoyment, the survey found. Those who slept poorly generally scored low on enjoyability throughout their day while those who slept well scored high.

The survey showed that people were most content when spending time relaxing with friends, having lunch with co-workers, watching TV alone, shopping with a spouse and cooking alone. The women ranked

spending time with their boss and commuting on the low end of the enjoyability scale.

Scientists believe this kind of specific measure can be valuable in a range of research. For example, Stone says, insurers are increasingly interested in how a new therapy or treatment affects quality of life rather than just focusing on whether it resolves a symptom or extends life.

"Insurance companies are saying we don't want to pay for treatments that impacts some physiological process but doesn't improve quality of life," he says. "You can imagine using this kind of study with symptoms or emotions or pain or fatigue—anything that is rapidly changing."



ayuda stress free holiday

Life & Style

Student wins China plastic-surgery pageant

A 22-year-old student who has had cosmetic surgery on her eyelids and cheeks was crowned the winner Saturday of China's first pageant for such "manmade beauties."

Feng Qian received a \$6,000 country club membership after being picked from among 20 finalists, who ranged in age from 18 to 62.

Surging numbers of newly prosperous Chinese are going under the knife after decades of communist austerity, seeking shapelier noses, fuller breasts and other features.

"I think this contest offered a platform for all the girls who have undergone plastic surgery and aren't willing to talk about it," Feng told reporters after the ceremony. "This is recognition of the girls like us."

Wearing a gold, sleeveless gown and a winner's crown of flowers, the student from northeastern Jilin province said she hopes to become a plastic surgeon herself one day.

The event was organized after an 18-year-old woman was disqualified from another Chinese beauty pageant this year on the grounds that she



Feng Qian, 22, from Jilin province celebrates after winning the title of China's top manmade beauty in Beijing Saturday, Dec. 18, 2004.

had had cosmetic surgery.

Competitors had to submit

proof that they had undergone

surgery. Sponsors included Chi-

nese makers of cosmetic surgery products. The contest had a talent show and evening gown and swimsuit competitions.

One contestant, Liu Xiaojin, was a 21-year-old transsexual who was a man until three years ago. She shared a prize for Best Media Image with the retiree, Liu Yulan, who has had a face-lift and three other procedures.

Other prizes handed out included Most Intelligent and Best Figure.

Organizers said 90 women from other countries, including the United States and Japan, applied to compete. But they said the non-Chinese applicants were deemed not serious enough about the contest or had language or scheduling problems.

The government says China's cosmetic surgery industry took in \$2.4 billion last year.

China also has eagerly embraced the notion of beauty pageants and modeling contests. The southern Chinese beach resort of Sanya has hosted the Miss World pageant for two straight years and is to be the site of the event again next year. (AP)

mpla

'Desperate Housewives,' providing a sense of community often missing from real life

By DAVID BLUM
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

It has become something of a sport among TV critics to deconstruct "Desperate Housewives" for their readers, using highbrow comparisons to the likes of John Cheever to explain the runaway success of ABC's Sunday night soap opera—the show I like to call "The Old and the Restless." (Nevermind the fact that the kind of people who read TV criticism in their daily newspaper aren't exactly looking for brainy term papers about their favorite shows.) Hard to believe, but the behavior of the women of Wisteria Lane has been analyzed by pretentious essayists who somehow imagine the "Desperate Housewives" scripts as worthy of intellectual inquiry. It will probably not be long before leading Housewife Teri Hatcher whispers her favorite curse word to James Lipton on "Inside the Actors Studio."

But anyone searching for subtext in the weekly machinations of TV's No. 1 hit will come away disappointed. What makes "Desperate Housewives" a hit isn't what happens every week (which, as regular viewers have probably begun to notice, isn't much) but how it happens. The show may have lured people with its glitzy portrayal of four sexy suburban moms in disarray, but what has made the story such an ongoing huge

ratings success has as much to do with the powerful notion of community that Americans find so seductive in an era of urban sprawl. "Housewives" celebrates the bonds of friendship and the intoxicating effect of observing a tight-knit social group as they share their secrets, their passions and their yearnings over a cup of coffee at the kitchen table. In the post-9/11 age when fear has overwhelmed trust, these neighbors and friends have chosen to open their doors without suspicion. These housewives may be desperate, but they're not scared.

The potent appeal of uninhibited camaraderie has always played a major part in American culture, and it has been TV's ace in the hole for decades. It's a running element that shows no sign of diminishing in value, as amply demonstrated by the together-forever spirit of these housewives. ("Sideways," the best movie I've seen this year, shares with these shows an affection for social intimacy.) How many of us have been fortunate enough to have a neighbor whose private thoughts we truly shared? If television realistically portrayed our actual relationships with one another, it would be filled with long stretches of dead airtime. Most of us lock up our doors and our secrets. And who has time for these conversations anyway? We're too busy sitting in front of the tube.

On television, close kinship has been standard operating procedure ever since Kramden met Norton. The honest, truth-baring relationships that form among men and women who work or live alongside one another—in offices, apartment buildings, cul-de-sacs, even desert islands—have formed the basis of a medium that has, since the '50s, distracted us successfully from our real lives. Instead of scheming with our own next-door neighbor (what a thought), we watch Lucy scheme with Ethel, or Mary with Rhoda, or Ross with Chandler. It's so much easier, so much safer, and so much more satisfying than knocking on doors in search of a best buddy to execute a scheme. Just turn on your TV set, and it's done! That way no one gets hurt.

The best shows have almost always evolved into chummy ensembles; "Cheers," "Taxi" and "Seinfeld" all introduced groups of like-minded individuals brought together by some unifying job or need. The most memorable characters on television have often been losers yearning for a better life; the men who crowded the bar at "Cheers" did so to trade in the pain of their daily existence for the banter of those at nearby barstools. On "Taxi," the motley assortment of New York cabbies who met up every night at their garage shared every conceivable form of experience,

and bonded over their mutual hatred of the dreaded boss in the booth. And what could ever compare to the love that tied together the office family on "Mary Tyler Moore" each week? It must have come as no surprise to anyone that when that classic sitcom wrapped up, the writers conceived a final group hug that literally could not be broken—the entire cast hopped off camera together into the sunset, physically connected to one another.

If you're searching for the real antecedent of "Desperate Housewives," don't reread Cheever or John Updike. Just watch reruns of "Seinfeld," "Friends" and "Sex and the City," and you'll discover where "Desperate Housewives" creator and head writer Marc Cherry studied the power of bonding as he was crafting his pilot last year, sitting at his mother's kitchen table. True, the women of "Desperate Housewives" don't gather regularly in restaurants and coffee shops to discourse on their various romantic entanglements, but that doesn't mean they're any less conversationally connected to one another. The "Sex and the City" gals share with their suburban counterparts a singular obsession with relationships; if anything, when the housewives meet up it comes with an even more powerful sexual (or at least emotional) charge.

Sandler up for laughs after dramatic turn

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Although he shows more dramatic range than usual in "Spanglish," Adam Sandler isn't running away from comedies.

"I do love the movies I've done in the past," Sandler told reporters. "I work hard at my movies. But looking back at my career, when I end up having kids and I say 'Throw in that 'Spanglish,' I know I'm going to be very proud of it."

In "Spanglish," Sandler plays the husband of Tea Leoni, whose Mexican housekeeper (Paz Vega) finds herself in a contest of wills with the neurotically overbearing Leoni.

Sandler has no illusions on whether his work in the comic drama is Oscar-worthy, although Jack Nicholson, Helen Hunt and Shirley MacLaine all received Academy Awards for movies directed by James L. Brooks, who also directed "Spanglish."

"I don't think about that," Sandler said. "I wasn't a kid growing up saying one day



Adam Sandler, a cast member in the new film "Spanglish," gestures for photographers at the premiere of the film in Los Angeles Dec. 9, 2004.

"I'll get an Oscar and make a speech." That wasn't on my

mind. So what I do is the best work I can do."

"Spanglish" opened nationwide Friday.

'Spawn' publisher in bankruptcy court

PHOENIX (AP)—A \$15 million jury award against "Spawn" creator Todd McFarlane has pushed his comic-book business into bankruptcy court.

Todd McFarlane Productions Inc. of suburban Tempe filed for Chapter 11 protection from creditors Friday in U.S. Bankruptcy Court.

A jury in St. Louis awarded former NHL player Tony Twist \$15 million after concluding that McFarlane and his company profited by using Twist's name without permission and that Twist's publicity rights were infringed.

McFarlane gave the name Antonio "Tony Twist" Twistelli to a New York mob boss character in his "Spawn" comic books in the early 1990s.

The U.S. Supreme Court in January rejected without comment an appeal by McFarlane arguing that his work was free speech.

Last year, he said his McFarlane Cos., then an umbrella of seven businesses, had annual sales exceeding \$50 million.

The bankruptcy filing allows McFarlane's company to continue to operate and reorganize its finances while freeing it from the threat of creditors' lawsuits.

In 1999, McFarlane paid \$3 million for Mark McGwire's 70th home-run baseball. He also paid \$450,000 last year for Barry Bonds' record 73rd home-run ball and owns Sammy Sosa's 66th home-run ball.

Fantasia says she doubted 'Idol' chances

NEW YORK (AP)—Even though millions of people voted Fantasia Barrino as their "American Idol," the singer admits there was a time when she doubted America's fondness for her.

"Towards the end, I didn't think I was gonna win, when it was me and Diana (DeGarmo)," the 20-year-old told The Associated Press in a recent interview.

Some of that skepticism crept into her psyche after fellow contestants Jennifer Hudson and La Toya London got the boot. Public discussion centered on whether voters would pick another black singer as their



Barrino

champion. Even Elton John chimed in that their low-vote tallies were racist.

"I didn't think I was gonna win," she said. "I don't know why I was thinking (that). Black people support, but I was like

"They probably ain't on the phone. (White people) are going to support their peoples."

Any concerns about her universal appeal were squashed after she won the contest earlier this year with a 1.3 million vote edge over DeGarmo.

"Every nationality would come up to me and say 'I voted for you, I love you.' So I stopped thinking like that," she said.

Fantasia, whose debut album "Free Yourself" was released last month, followed Ruben Studdard as "American Idol" champ. Kelly Clarkson won the Fox Television competition in its first year.

T-Boz, Chilli look for collaborators

NEW YORK (AP)—Rozonda "Chilli" Thomas and Tionne "T-Boz" Watkins are looking to collaborate with a new voice, but the TLC stars insist they're not trying to replace the late Lisa "Left Eye" Lopes.

"Nothing has changed. We're not replacing Lisa," Thomas told The Associated Press in a recent interview. "We're not looking for a new member."

Last month, the pair announced they were launching a search to find a vocalist to perform with them in concert and for one track on TLC's upcoming greatest hits project—a journey that will be the subject of a UPN reality show, "R U The Girl with T-Boz and Chilli."

Some fans were concerned that Thomas and Watkins were seeking to fill the shoes of Lopes, who died in a car crash in Honduras in 2002.

But the duo said then that they would never try to replace Lopes—perhaps the most dynamic member of the trio, with her colorful personality and energetic raps. Instead, they say



TLC members Tionne "T-Boz" Watkins, right, and Rozonda "Chilli" Thomas pose in a file photo from Oct. 29, 2002, in Atlanta.

they're simply looking for a fan to perform with them for a one-time performance and for a song on the greatest hits project.

"We started out with our fans and it's all about our greatest hits," Thomas said. "Basically, we are trying to give back to our fans and find one girl and give her a chance of a lifetime, to do one last performance with TLC."

"We kind of call it, like, fan

appreciation," said Watkins. "We started together and we want to end it together, and that's something that Lisa would have been fond of."

TLC, which debuted in 1992, ranks as one of the best-selling girl groups in pop music history. Their multiple hits include "Unpretty," "Waterfalls," "Creep" and "No Scrubs." Their last full album was 2002's "3D."

Sales parties are no fun for woman on a budget

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: I would like to share my pet peeve with you. It's being invited to "sales parties" for kitchenware, beauty products, etc. I can't afford to spend money at these so-called parties because I have three children to feed.



Dear Abby

I would prefer not to disclose my financial situation to every person who issues these invitations, which arrive sometimes on a weekly basis. I have tried to tell friends that I am busy that night, and they either find out that I really don't have plans or try to sign me up for an "outside order." I have shared with a few friends that I am on a strict budget, and they reply with "just come and don't buy anything."

That's not a workable solution, because the consultants see the word "no" as a challenge and won't take "no" for an answer. Also, it's intimidating to see everyone else pull out their checkbooks. How can I get uninvited permanently so I can stop avoiding the mailbox?

CAN'T AFFORD MY FRIENDS IN ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

DEAR CAN'T: Real friends don't subject friends to embarrassment or use them to get special deals by promoting commercial products. Ignore the solicitations as you would any other, and don't feel guilty. If you're questioned, just say you weren't interested in buying—it's the truth.

DEAR ABBY: I recently attended several soccer practices for 6-year-olds. One boy on the team, "Timmy," is so obese he can barely run. His mother screams at him from the sidelines, giving him directions every few minutes. Sometimes the poor child "runs" in the wrong direction and scores for the opposing team. (I personally believe he suffers from ADD.) Timmy said to his mother, "I can't run!"—and he can't. His large belly and huge thighs prevent him from running. One can see his frustration.

After the game, each player is given a paper sack of refreshments. One time, it was a chocolate cupcake, a bag of chips and a cold drink. At the end of the game, after the snacks, Timmy ran to his mother. He was crying. She was talking on her cell phone. She said, "Here's 50 cents—go buy a candy bar." My heart aches for this boy. What would you suggest?

CONCERNED PARENT, BLOOMINGTON, IND.

DEAR CONCERNED: Since you can't change Timmy's mother, speak to the coach. That's the only person the boy should be listening to during a game. Perhaps the mother will take guidance from the coach regarding a healthy diet and exercise regimen for her son. Another thing you might do is volunteer to provide some healthy snacks for the players after the games, and organize the other team moms to do the same.

DEAR ABBY: My 14-year-old son was invited to a 14-year-old neighbor's birthday party. On the invitation it said, "Suggested gift—\$20." The boy's parents were aware that he put it on the invitation. I think it was inappropriate to ask for a specific gift, especially money. What's your opinion?

OFFENDED IN MASSACHUSETTS

DEAR OFFENDED: My opinion is the same as yours. The fact that the parents didn't put a stop to the gift "suggestion" shows they either endorsed it or didn't know any better. By allowing it, the parents did a disservice to their son.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more attractive person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Pastimes



USC's Matt Leinart wins Heisman trophy

NEW YORK (AP) — Matt Leinart replaced a Heisman Trophy winner and became one himself. The Southern California quarterback won college football's most prestigious individual award Saturday night, beating out Oklahoma teammates Adrian Peterson and Jason White, last year's winner.

In 2002, Carson Palmer won the Heisman as a senior with the Trojans. Leinart succeeded the first overall pick in the NFL draft with a splendid sophomore season that set him up as the preseason favorite this year.

Leinart has delivered, throwing for 2,990 yards and 28 TDs and leading the top-ranked Trojans to a 12-0 regular season.

"I remember when Carson was sitting up here," Leinart said. "He said his heart was beating out of his chest, I think mine's about to do the same thing."

The junior is USC's sixth Heisman winner, tying the Trojans with Ohio State for second-most behind Notre Dame's seven.

Peterson, the freshman tailback, was second, White was third, Utah quarterback Alex Smith was fourth and Leinart's teammate Reggie Bush was fifth in the voting.

Leinart and Bush will compete against Peterson and White again on Jan. 4 in the Orange Bowl. The winner of that contest takes home the national title. It'll be the first time two players with Heisman trophies have played each other in college.

"I know they're going to be coming after me," Leinart said of the Sooners.

Leinart received 1,325 points and won all but one of the six voting regions. He came in third in the Southwest, where White led with 263 points and Peterson was second with 197.

Peterson received 997 overall points, edging out White (957) for second. Peterson's second-place finish is the best by a freshman. Georgia's Herschel Walker had the previous freshman best when he was third to winner George Rogers of South Carolina in 1980. Michael Vick was a redshirt

freshman at Virginia Tech when he was third in 1999.

White had a chance to become just the second two-time Heisman winner, joining Ohio State tailback Archie Griffin (1974 and '75).

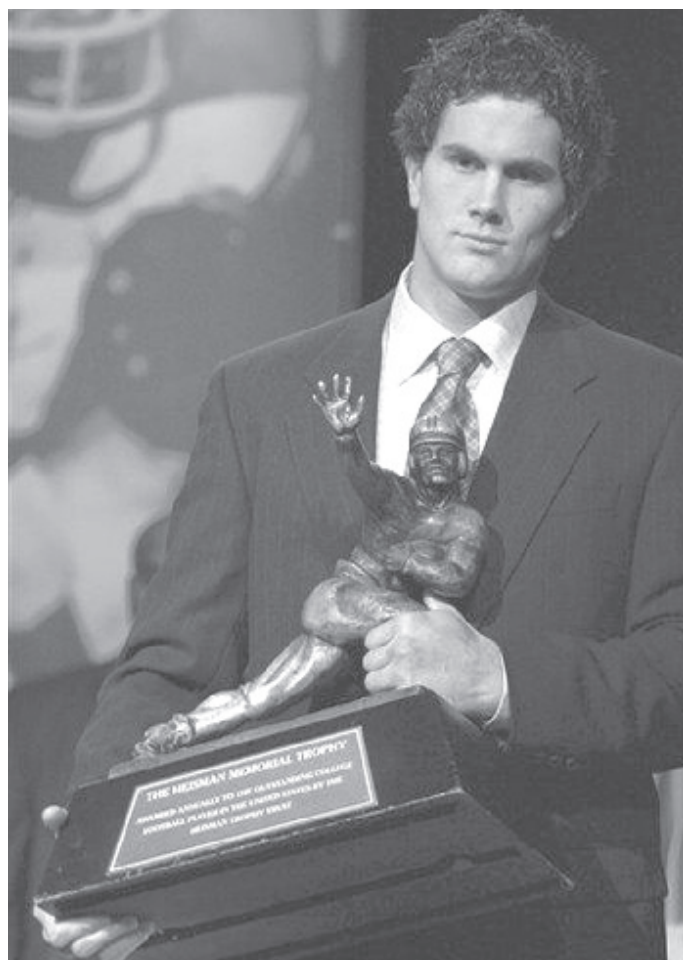
Smith, who has led Utah to a berth in the Bowl Championship Series, received 635 points, and Bush, the Trojans' explosive and versatile tailback had 597.

Leinart had never thrown a pass at USC when he won a four-way battle to replace Palmer in 2003.

The left-hander practically matched Palmer's Heisman numbers in his first season as a starter, throwing for 3,556 yards and 38 TDs while leading the Trojans to a share of the national title. He finished sixth in last year's Heisman balloting.

While Bush has provided a slew of dazzling plays for USC, the laid-back Leinart is the Trojans' leader.

Breaking in a new set of receivers and playing behind a rebuilt offensive line, Leinart has completed 66 percent of his



USC's Matt Leinart picks up the Heisman trophy after being announced as the winner Saturday, Dec. 11, 2004, in New York.

passes with just six interceptions this season.

The Trojans are 24-1 with Leinart as a starter and have won 21 straight games.

USC's first four Heisman winners were running backs, starting with Mike Garrett in 1965 and ending with Marcus Allen in 1981.

But Tailback U. has turned into Quarterback College since offensive coordinator Norm Chow arrived with coach Pete Carroll in 2001.

Chow turned Palmer from a talented enigma into a potential NFL franchise quarterback. Leinart is Chow's third protege to win the Heisman, along with BYU's Ty Detmer.

Leinart could also join Palmer as an NFL first-round pick, maybe as soon as April if he decides to skip his final college season.

That's quite a rise for the geeky kid from Santa Ana, Calif.

"No, I was a fat kid and cross-eyed and had glasses about an inch thick," Leinart said. "I use to get made fun of. It's been a long time since those days."

Klitschko stops Williams to defend heavyweight title

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Vitali Klitschko staked his claim to being the true heavyweight champion Saturday, knocking Danny Williams down four times and giving him a savage beating before finally stopping him in the eighth round.

He then dedicated the win to democracy in his native Ukraine, where he planned to head Sunday to support the opposition presidential candidate.

"I feel this was the best performance of my career," Klitschko said. "But this victory was not just for me, but also for democracy in the Ukraine."

Klitschko retained his WBC heavyweight title in a lopsided fight that left Williams bloodied, battered and barely able to see.

Williams was taken to a local hospital for a brain scan after the fight, while Klitschko also went to have x-rays taken of his swollen hands to see if they were broken from hitting Williams on the head so many times.

Williams remained game even after the final knockdown in the eighth round, getting up at the count of nine and wanting to continue. But referee Jay Nady decided he had taken enough punishment and waved the fight to a close at 1:26 of the round.

"I feel I am the real heavyweight champion," Klitschko said. "I'm willing to fight anybody."

Klitschko, who owns just one of the three major heavyweight titles, made a case for being the

best of the three champions in a dominating effort against a game but completely outclassed challenger.

Klitschko did something Mike Tyson couldn't do against Williams, knocking him down in the first round and giving him such a beating that Williams couldn't come back as he did in his upset win over Tyson.

Williams tried his best, plodding after Klitschko in the third round, but he rarely got inside the 2.01-meter (6-foot-7) champion's stiff jab and took a pounding from his right hand.

"My strategy was to use my reach because I knew he would try to get close to me," Klitschko said.

There had been questions about Klitschko's stamina and his tendency to cut around his eyes, but he had no problems with either in a fight he dominated from the opening bell.

With his brother, Wladimir, working the corner, Klitschko swarmed all over Williams in the opening round, landing 52 punches to only four for the challenger. He knocked Williams down with 37 seconds left in the round and hit him almost at will.

Klitschko wore an orange flag on his trunks, signifying his support for Ukrainian presidential candidate Viktor Yushchenko. Others in the crowd waved Ukrainian flags and orange flags, the color of their candidate's campaign.

Red Sox sign Wells; Pavano courts Yanks

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP)—David Wells

made the surprising decision to sign with the Boston Red Sox, Carl Pavano picked the New York Yankees and Roger Clemens narrowed his choices to the Houston Astros or retirement.

Pittsburgh and Cleveland finalized the first trade of the winter meetings Saturday, with reliever Arthur Rhodes going to the Indians for outfielder Matt Lawton.

Boston also worked to re-sign Pedro Martinez and add short-stop Edgar Renteria. And while the Yankees' efforts to sign Pavano moved forward, there might be a hitch in New York's deal with Jaret Wright, with the team still evaluating the results of his physical.

As nearly two dozen managers talked about their offseason moves, Atlanta's Bobby Cox said John Smoltz might rejoin the starting rotation if the Braves find another closer, and Atlanta negotiated to acquire Danny Kolb from Milwaukee. Oakland discussed trading Tim Hudson, possibly to the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Baseball's annual swapfest also had a bit of spectacle on Day Two of the four-day session. Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman arrived in a lobby filled with baseball executives and agents accompanied by two tall showgirls wearing feathered headdresses and an one gold-clad Elvis impersonator, campaigning for major league

baseball to put a team in the gambling mecca.

Free-agent first basemen Richie Sexson and Carlos Delgado also showed up to meet with teams.

Wells, a loud lefty known for his unabashed love of Yankees history, agreed to an \$8 million, two-year contract with Boston that could be worth up to \$18 million over two years, a deal subject to Wells passing a physical.

It will be sort of a Babe Ruth reverse commute for Wells, who spent four seasons with the Yankees during two tours. In June 1997, he even wore a Ruth cap from 1934 during a game against Cleveland.

Red Sox manager Terry Francona declined comment on Wells, but he said he wasn't worried about having too many characters on the defending World Series champions.

"Last year we had a lot of strong personalities but they didn't really go their own (way)," Francona said. "They just came together. I guess that's what you want."

Wells, 41, went 12-8 with a 3.73 ERA last season for his hometown San Diego Padres and made \$6 million. He gets a \$3 million signing bonus from the Red Sox, salaries of \$2.5 million a year and the chance to earn \$200,000 per start from 11-20 and \$300,000 per start from 21-30.

"With the offer he got, it looked like it was an easy decision," Yankees general manager Brian Cashman said.

Cashman wasn't surprised Wells bolted to his old enemy.

"Despite his love for the Yankees, he walked away from us last year," Cashman said. "The bottom line is it's a business. He had to do what's best for him and his family."

With Pavano, the Yankees' rotation will get younger. Anaheim, Baltimore, Boston, Detroit and Seattle also sought the right-hander, 18-8 with a 3.00 ERA for Florida last season.

Pavano called his agent, Scott Shapiro, on Saturday morning and informed him of his decision, and Shapiro and Cashman closed in on a four-year contract worth about \$39 million.

New York also has a preliminary agreement with right-hander Jaret Wright on a \$21 million, three-year contract, but the Yankees still are evaluating his physical exam, a baseball official said on condition of anonymity, and hasn't determined whether he passed it or failed it. Wright, who turns 29 later this month, had shoulder surgery in 2000 and 2001. He went 15-8 with a 3.28 for Atlanta last season, the best year of his big league career.

Clemens, 42, said last week that he was leaning toward retirement and his agent, Randy Hendricks, said the seven-time Cy Young Award winner probably will make his decision between Jan. 5-20. If Clemens decides to pitch in 2005, he and the Astros either will agree to a contract or his salary will be determined by an arbitrator.

"It certainly makes a statement to us about how Roger feels about the Houston Astros," new general manager Tim Lincecum said. "Our interest is sincere and we'd certainly love to have him back."

Clemens' commitment to the Astros could help the team resign star center fielder Carlos Beltran, the prize of this year's free-agent class.

"It's not why we did it, but we understand there might be an impact," Hendricks said. "He thinks the world of Carlos and hopes he re-signs."

Rhodes, a 35-year-old left-hander, was acquired by Pittsburgh from Oakland on Nov. 27 in the trade that sent catcher Jason Kendall to the Athletics. Rhodes lost his closer's job last season while going 3-3 with a 5.12 ERA for the A's. He will become Bob Wickman's setup man in Cleveland.

"There were a multitude of things that happened to him to explain why he had a bad year. We're still hopeful he's going to be a strong, solid contributor in the bullpen," Cleveland general manager Mark Shapiro said.

Lawton was a huge disappointment with the Indians, who acquired him in the 2001 trade that sent Roberto Alomar to the New York Mets. The 33-year-old battled injuries during much of his three seasons in Cleveland.

"He's got some power, a left-handed hitter, it adds some nice balance to our offense," general manager Dave Littlefield said.

Montgomerie leads Target World Challenge

THOUSAND OAKS, Calif.
(AP)—Colin Montgomerie

passed a big test Saturday, overcoming a few obnoxious fans and a pairing with Tiger Woods to post a 4-under 67 and take a two-shot lead in the Target World Challenge.

Montgomerie was hardly intimidated playing with the tournament host, needing only four holes to put four shots between them on the leaderboard.

And when Jay Haas made a charge into the lead, the 41-year-old Scot responded with a 4-iron into 8 feet for eagle on the par-5 16th and a 9-iron into 8 feet for another birdie on the 17th to finish at 13-under 200.

"There's no satisfaction beating any player," Montgomerie said. "The satisfaction comes from seeing your name on the top of the leaderboard."

Sweeter yet would be seeing it there Sunday afternoon, having Woods hand him the trophy and cashing the \$1.25 million check, the fourth-largest payout.

Woods recovered from a terrible start—3 over after four holes—with a birdie-par-birdie finish for a 69 that left him two shots behind along with Haas (67) and Jim Furyk, who birdied five of his last six holes for a 67.

Miguel Angel Jimenez had the low round of the day at 66 and was another shot behind.

Montgomerie enjoyed the warmth of southern California and the reception from the fans, but not all of them. One man cheered loudly when he



Colin Montgomerie of Scotland, tees off on the eighth hole as Tiger Woods looks on during the third round of the Target World Challenge, Saturday, Dec. 11, 2004, in Thousand Oaks, Calif.

missed a birdie at the 12th, and the Scot glared.

"That was uncalled for," Woods said, who had security talk to the fan.

Asked about it later, Monty brushed it off. He was more excited about his play.

Montgomerie is in good position to win his first stroke-play title in the United States. He won the Match Play Champion-

ship in 1998—the year before it became an official event—and the Skins Game in 2000.

The Target World Challenge doesn't count in the record books, although Montgomerie surely would take satisfaction out of beating Woods, Vijay Singh and the rest of the elite, 16-man field at Sherwood.

"It's obviously a big mistake he invited me in the first place,"

Montgomerie said with a laugh.

And given his history being paired with Woods in stroke play—a drubbing at the '97 Masters, a three-hole playoff loss in Germany two years ago—Monty showed he was headed in the right direction.

"If you had said I would shoot 67, I would have walked home—well, not home, but to the hotel," he said. "If you would tell me

I'll shoot 67 tomorrow, I'll walk to the airport."

Woods probably wanted to walk home to Florida after his start.

He three-putted for bogey on No. 1, missing from 2 feet for par. He left a shot in the bunker at No. 3 and took double bogey. He three-putted for bogey on No. 4, missing that par putt from 3 feet.

"There were a lot of holes left," Woods said. "I had been playing well all week, and I figured I might as well do what I had been doing, and not play hockey on the greens."

His goal for Sunday?

"Get off to a better start than I did today," Woods said.

The best start belonged to the 51-year-old Haas, who birdied four of his first six holes and had a two-shot lead when he got up-and-down for birdie from short of the 13th green. His only glitch was going long on the 14th hole for bogey, but he was solid coming down the stretch.

"It's obviously a pretty impressive leaderboard, so I don't think anybody is too intimidated seeing my name up there," Haas said.

Furyk also struggled from the start, leaving two shots in the bunker at No. 3 for double bogey. But he had the best finish, with birdies on every hole except the par-5 16th.

About the only player missing is Singh, the PGA Tour player of the year. He birdied three of his first four holes, but made no progress the rest of the way and had to settle for a 68 that left him 11 shots out of the lead.

Webber, Bibby help Kings hold off Pacers

INDIANAPOLIS
(AP)—Chris Webber had 26 points, 10 rebounds and six assists, and Mike Bibby added 21 points to help the Sacramento Kings

hold off the Indiana Pacers 97-92 in overtime Saturday night.

"They made us take quick shots and we played a little selfish at times," Webber said. "But we have to play on a more consistent level to be as good as we want to be."

Indiana had six players reach double figures, but Reggie Miller missed his last eight shots and the Pacers lost their seventh straight.

Sacramento's Brad Miller, an All-Star with Indiana, sealed the win with four free throws in the final 9 seconds of overtime.

Sacramento has won six of its last seven games.

Austin Croshere led the Pacers with 21 points—13 in the fourth quarter and overtime. Jeff Foster added 11 points and 18 rebounds.

"There is no explanation why we are missing 3-pointers," Croshere said. "A loss is a loss, and we've got to shake this."

Mavericks 102, Rockets 78

In Houston, Michael Finley scored a season-high 26 points and led a huge third-quarter charge as Dallas handed Houston its biggest loss of the season.

Finley, recovering from a sprained right ankle, hit five of his eight 3-point attempts. He made four straight 3-pointers in a 23-8 run in the third quarter.

Dirk Nowitzki added 22 points and 14 rebounds for Dallas, and Tracy McGrady led Houston with 15 points.

Grizzlies 72, Pistons 68

In Memphis, Tennessee, Pau Gasol scored 20 points and Shane Battier hit four free throws in the final 20 seconds to lead Memphis past Detroit.

Battier broke a 68-68 tie with two free throws with 19.4 seconds remaining, and added two more with 12 seconds left to complete the scoring. Detroit's Rasheed Wallace missed a pair of 3-pointers and had another shot blocked by Gasol in the final seconds.

Wallace had 22 points for the Pistons, and Richard Hamilton scored 18.

Bulls 99, Timberwolves 88

In Chicago, rookie Ben Gordon scored a career-high 31 points, 16 in the fourth quarter to help Chicago hold off a furious Minnesota comeback.

Minnesota trailed by 24 in the second quarter and rallied within one in the final period but couldn't get the lead because Gordon scored 10 straight points for the Bulls at one juncture, hitting a pair of 3-pointers.

Kirk Hinrich added 19 points for the Bulls. Kevin Garnett had 16 points and 21 rebounds for the Timberwolves.

Spurs 116, Cavaliers 97

In San Antonio, Tim Duncan scored 34 points, and San Antonio had its best shooting night of the season.

The Spurs shot 84 percent from the floor in the first half to take a 69-45 lead, and finished the night at 66 percent.

Cleveland's Drew Gooden scored a season-high 28, and LeBron James added 23 points and 10 assists.

Nets 95, Hawks 90

In Atlanta, Richard Jefferson scored 19 of his 21 points in the second half, and Travis Best, starting in place of Jason Kidd, had a season-high 21 for New Jersey.

Kidd, who played 17 minutes as he continues to recover from a knee injury, hit five of six free throws in the final 33.4 seconds and finished with nine points.

Antoine Walker led the Hawks with 25 points and 13 rebounds.

Celtics 98, SuperSonics 84

In Seattle, Paul Pierce scored 22 points and Gary Payton had 21 against his former team to help Boston beat Seattle and snap a three-game losing streak.

Payton set the tempo against the club he led for 13 seasons, outdueling second-year point guard Luke Ridnour, and the Celtics held Seattle to a season-low 32.6 percent from the floor and kept the Sonics scoreless in the final 3 minutes.

Mark Blount added 11 points for Boston, and Tony Allen had 12 to help the Celtics hand Seattle its first homecourt loss in 10 games this season.

Rashard Lewis scored 19 points to lead the Sonics and Ray Allen had 16.

The Sonics had won eight of nine after losing in Boston on Nov. 21, but now the Celtics are responsible for two of Seattle's four losses on the season.

Lakers 89, Clippers 87

In Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant scored 37 points and had 10 rebounds as the Los Angeles Lakers edged crosstown rivals the Clippers.

The game was close most of the way, with Bryant helping pull it out by scoring nine points in a late 4:39 span. The Clippers had a chance to tie it in the final seconds, but Corey Maggette's running jumper went in and out of the basket.

Bryant missed making it three triple-doubles in a row, finishing with five assists. Lamar Odom added 19 points and 12 rebounds for the Lakers.

Bryant made all 10 of his free throws and the Lakers finished 20-of-20 from the line. The Clippers were 18-of-22. Maggette led the Clippers with 27 points.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	9	10	.474	—
Boston	8	11	.421	1
Philadelphia	7	12	.368	2
New Jersey	7	13	.350	2 1/2
Toronto	7	15	.318	3 1/2

Southeast Division				
Orlando	13	6	.684	—
Miami	14	7	.667	—
Washington	11	6	.647	1
Charlotte	4	13	.235	8
Atlanta	4	16	.200	9 1/2

Central Division				
Cleveland	12	8	.600	—
Detroit	10	10	.500	2
Indiana	10	10	.500	2
Milwaukee	6	11	.353	4 1/2
Chicago	4	14	.222	7

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division				
San Antonio	17	5	.773	—
Dallas	14	8	.636	3
Houston	9	12	.429	7 1/2
Memphis	9	13	.409	8
New Orleans	1	17	.056	14

Northwest Division				
Seattle	17	4	.810	—
Minnesota	13	7	.650	3 1/2
Denver	12	7	.632	4
Portland	9	9	.500	6 1/2
Utah	9	11	.450	7 1/2

Pacific Division				
Phoenix	17	3	.850	—
Sacramento	14	6	.700	3
L.A. Clippers	11	8	.579	5 1/2
L.A. Lakers	11	8	.579	5 1/2
Golden State	5	14	.263	11 1/2

Yesterday's Games	
New Jersey 95, Atlanta 90	
Memphis 72, Detroit 68	
Sacramento 97, Indiana 92, OT	
Dallas 102, Houston 78	
Chicago 99, Minnesota 88	
San Antonio 116, Cleveland 97	
Boston 98, Seattle 84	
L.A. Lakers 89, L.A. Clippers 87	

TARGET WORLD CHALLENGE SCORES

Third Round		
Colin Montgomerie	67-66-67	200
Jay Haas	69-66-67	202
Jim Furyk	67-68-67	202
Tiger Woods	67-66-69	202
Miguel Angel Jimenez	68-69-66	203
Padraig Harrington	68-69-67	204
Chris DiMarco	69-67-70	206
Chad Campbell	70-68-69	207
Stewart Cink	70-69-69	208
Fred Couples	68-70-71	209
Davis Love III	70-66-74	210
Vijay Singh	74-69-68	211
Kenny Perry	73-73-69	215
Todd Hamilton	73-69-74	216
Stephen Ames	74-69-74	217
John Daly	73-69-75	217

SPORTS TRANSACTIONS

NBA
CLEVELAND INDIANS-Acquired LHP Arthur Rhodes from Pittsburgh for OF Matt Lawton. Named Nick Kenney assistant athletic trainer.
HOUSTON ASTROS-Announced RHP Roger Clemens had accepted salary arbitration.

NBA
SEATTLE SUPERSONICS-Placed C Robert Swift and F Damien Wilkins on the injured list. Activated G Ronald Murray and C Vitaly Potapenko from the injured list.

NFL
CHICAGO BEARS-Signed G Bryan Anderson. Waived LB Corey Jenkins.
SEATTLE SEAHAWKS-Placed T Chris Terry on injured reserve. Signed WR Jason Willis from the practice squad.

College
MARYLAND-Announced sophomore basketball F Hassan Fofana has decided to transfer to another school.
POST, CONN.-Named Matt Micros women's soccer coach and Craig Schroeder men's and women's cross country coach.
SOUTH CAROLINA-Named Madre Hill assistant football coach.

By The Associated Press

LOCAL SCORES

Govt. League Standings	
PSS	5 0
DOL	5 1
DCCA	4 2
DPS I	4 2
CHC	4 2
Tinian	1 1
NMC	3 4
CPA	2 3
P&S	2 4
OPA	1 4
DPS II	1 4
Mayor's Office	0 5

Labor does number on OPA

By **MARK RABAGO**
REPORTER

Department of Labor solidified their hold of second place in the 2004 Government Basketball League after beating Office of Public Auditor to a pulp, 76-46, Saturday afternoon at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Like a diesel engine, DOL started rather slow but was still no match against an obviously overmatched OPA squad. With power forward Ray Roberto powering his way for all of his four points, DOL took a 14-8 lead after the opening quarter.

DOL players then began to find their rhythm in the second quarter. The menacing front-line of power forward Steve Rasa and center Tim Wesley erupted for 14 points, while sharpshooter Beverly Igitol let loose for four more, as Labor more than doubled up OPA, 34-16, at the break.

OPA leading scorer Chris Camacho tried in vain to lead his team back against DOL in the third quarter by firing six points. But it was futile in the face of a torrent of points from DOL.

Igitol bombed away from the land of plenty and Wesley and Rasa continued to control the paint, as DOL was able to take a 52-31 spread into the fourth and final quarter.

It was already a won ballgame for Labor as the playoff period got underway but Mitch Aaron used garbage time to shine on the court.

DOL's starting point guard put on the finishing touches on a dominating performance by his team, logging in nine of his 16 points in the final 10 minutes.

Rasa led four DOL players in double figures with 21 points. Aaron scored the aforementioned 16, Wesley 15, while Igitol wound up with 12 markers.

Camacho and Erick Atalig

were the only OPA players to end up in twin digits with 17 and 10 points, respectively.

The second game between Commonwealth Ports Authority and Tinian was postponed because the latter held its Christmas party the same time as game time.

The government league resumes tonight with a battle between the Commonwealth's two law enforcement agencies, as Department of Public Safety I faces DPS II in the 6:30pm first game. The 8pm second game then pits undefeated Public School System against OPA.

DOL 76 – Rasa 21, Aaron 16, Wesley 15, Igitol 12, Tudela 6, Roberto 4, Paraiso 2.

OPA 46 – C. Camacho 17, Atalig 10, Torres 9, D. Camacho 8, Tomokane 2.

Scoring by quarters: 14-8, 34-16, 52-31, 76-46.

Referees: Dado Vistal and Jess Pacheco.

Crime Stoppers a month away



By **BRAD E. RUSZALA**
REPORTER

Slots are filling up for next month's 3rd Annual NMI Crime Stoppers Slow Pitch Softball Tournament, and organizers have offered a little more incentive for teams to hurry with their entries.

Following a meeting of the tournament directors last week, officials announced that there would be an extra \$50 added to prizes of the Top 3 teams.

In the 2005 edition of the tournament, only 12 teams will be permitted to compete for the trophy and newly increased \$300 prize for first place. The first 12 teams to sign up and pay in full will take part in all of the fun in the sun, and as of dinnertime yesterday, there were

already three teams that have thrown their hats into the ring.

The underhanded extravaganza that is the tournament will run through January 7, 8, and 9. The teams wishing to take part in the festivities need to sign up soon.

Besides the first place prizes, there will be a trophy and \$200 awarded to the first runner-up, a trophy and \$150 for the second runner-up, and trophies for the third and fourth runners-up.

All of the fun of tournaments past will be returning, as there will be two homerun derbies—one for the players, on Saturday, Jan. 8, and one for celebrities, on Sunday, Jan. 9. Though no list of the high-profile guests has been released, chances are good that many of the stars from last year's show will be returning to vie for the \$50 prize.

In keeping with recent tradition, the organizers have put together many exciting and valuable raffle prizes. It only takes one ticket to win the raffle, but tickets will be

on sale during the games for \$1 each. Somebody's dollar bill will win this year's grand prize—a pair of roundtrip tickets to Cairns, Australia courtesy of Continental Airlines. Continental also put up the award for the winner of the mini grand prize raffle—one roundtrip ticket to Manila.

The aspiring Barry Bonds types will receive an added incentive to swing for the fences this year, as all entrants of the Home Run Derby will receive 20 tickets for raffle drawing.

To enter the event, simply head over to Car Quest in Chalan Kanoa and fill out the entry and waiver forms, and pay the entry fee. The cost to enter a team in the annual tournament is \$250, and the cost to enter the homerun derby is \$20 per individual. All checks should be made out to NMI Crime Stoppers.

For further information, please contact Eric David by calling 664-9022, Jim Ripple by calling 235-2302, or Jerry Ayuyu by calling 664-9127.

TINIAN

From Page 28

free ferryboat rides during the duration of the tournament.

Tinian netters have become a source of pride for the middle island of the Mariana Islands chain and have so far bagged eight first-place and second-place trophies in the doubles competition with more expected in the singles and mixed doubles division of the yearend tournament.

The Tinian father-and-son pair of Sonny and Benjie Decena had mixed fortunes in the men's 3.0 singles competition, however.

Sonny was nipped by third-seed Noel Manalang in three sets, 3-6, 6-0, 7-6 (8-6), while Benjie got the better of Boy Cruz, 6-4, 4-6, 6-4.

Top seed Gary Ramsey, meanwhile, escaped the upset axe once again, edging Roy Banados 7-6 (7-4), 5-7, 6-1.

In men's 4.0, No. 1 seed Jess Pacheco's ailing foot finally gave way and he lost to speedster Beltau Toshi in a count of 6-1, 6-4. Father Ryan Jimenez vent out his frustration on Jorge Olanda, topping the men's double champion in straight sets, 6-4, 6-3. The night before, Jimenez lost to Raj Rai in a

close one in the men's 3.0.

Abet Encarnacion was also on a winning end of a 6-3, 7-6 (7-3) match against Eric Mahinay.

Top seed Boyet Minor was back in fine form against Buddy Garote, as the favored player advanced with a 7-5, 7-6 (9-7) victory in the men's 4.5. Also coming through in the men's open was Lito Cabrera, who beat an erratic Nicolas Son 4-6, 6-3, 6-1.

In the women's 4.0, Ellen Uy, Agnes Salazar, and Ayumi Cajigan all won their matches. Uy defeated Sadako Arriola, 6-3, 6-2; Salazar upended Jenny Uy, 3-6, 6-2, 7-6 (9-7); and Cajigan downed Asun Demapan.



MARK RABAGO

DOL's Ray Roberto tries to beat the game clock in their 2004 Government Basketball League game against Office of the Public Auditor Saturday.

SML

From Page 28

tied with six runs batted in.

Finishing in third with a 4-5 record were the Heinz & David North Stars, but they boasted the league's top hitter in Mike Cruz. The brightest North Star was 13-for-33 at the plate for a .394 batting average, but Cruz could not carry the team to the pennant by himself.

Cruz was joined by teammate Jesse Ramon on the list of top performers, as Ramon also smacked a triple this season.

The Speaker Fitial Pirates also finished with a 4-5 record

in what has shaped up to be not a big season for them. The Pirates had their sights set on reclaiming the pennant, but a string of losses put an end to their hopes.

The second and third finishers in the batting race both played for the Pirates, as Pete Tomokane (.375) and Matt Kintol (.371) consistently found a way to produce for their team.

Tomokane, with teammates B.J. Seman and J.J. Taitano landed on the triple list, while fellow Pirate Dwight Quitano finished the season with six runs batted in.



USC's Matt Leinart wins Heisman trophy
Matt Leinart replaced a Heisman Trophy winner and became one himself. The Southern California quarterback won college football's most prestigious individual award Saturday night.

25

Saipan Tribune Sports

Montgomerie leads Target World

Colin Montgomerie passed a big test Saturday, overcoming a few obnoxious fans and a pairing with Tiger Woods to post a 4-under 67 and take a two-shot lead in the Target World Challenge.

26



SAIPAN TRIBUNE

28 MONDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2004

Flush It! takes PIC title



Just prior to playing the Clam Smackers in the finale of the 6th Annual Miller 4-Person Beach Volleyball League, Flush It! pose with their \$220 check for placing second in the regular season standings. Regular season MVP Don Dunlop gets into position to bump the ball for Flush It! during the championship game, inset.

BRAD E. RUSZALA

By BRAD E. RUSZALA
REPORTER

Flush It! rallied back from a 5-9 deficit on Thursday night to down the Clam Smackers 15-13 in the single elimination tournament of the Top 8 teams from the regular season of the 6th Annual Miller 4-Person Beach Volleyball League.

Led by the league's most valuable player Don Dunlop,



Flush It! refocused their collective efforts to overcome mighty Clams, with teammates Aleta Glaze, Rannel Calexterio, Quincy Johnson, Jason Park, Marivic Rosario, and Richard Sikkell.

After players from all of the uniquely named teams competed on the sand courts of the Pacific Islands Club for weeks to decide the regular season champion, the top teams were invited to partake in the

one-night tournament.

The Clam Smackers started the tournament as the eighth seed, but quickly gained respect as they upset the regular season champion Sneezy Lambleezies, 15-11.



They followed that up with a 15-5 shellacking of the Dragon Flares to get into the first place game.

Flush It! was expected to do well in the tournament, having suffered one loss through-

out the regular season. They started their night with a win against an injury riddled Bill Bratzski's, 15-10, and carried the momentum into their following match with rivals Bend It Like Megan.

Flush It! won the game by a 15-8 score, but the total was not a fair indication of how close the game was. Both teams had to fight for every point, but it was not to be for the crafty Bend It Like Megan.

The Clam Smackers' Doug Dewitt was voted by representatives from all of the teams as the league's most improved player, and was rewarded with a case of Gatorade, as did Dunlop for the MVP.

The champions were awarded seven PIC water-park passes and a meal at the Magellan restaurant for their winning ways, while the runner ups received seven water park passes.

SML leaders a step above

By BRAD E. RUSZALA
REPORTER

While the four teams of the Saipan Major League baseball's fall edition have wrapped up their season and already started the playoffs, the statisticians have released the final results of the top hitters and hurlers.

The Rep. Dave Apatang Hustlers repeated as pennant champions with a 6-4 record following a tiebreaker with the Kautz Glass Glazers, and they did so with some of the top hitters in the game.

J.R. Suel (.353), Manny Sablan (.286) and Roy Celis (.270) make up three of the Top 10 hitters in the league. Only four batters have had more success than Suel, who is also tied for second in doubles (3), and runs batted in (7).

Sablan is one of those tied with Suel in doubles, but he is in a world of his own in one category, as he knocked the first homerun of the wooden bat era last week. The steady catcher provides the power when needed, but teammate Celis produces offense all over the board.



Celis is also tied with Suel and Sablan with three doubles, scored the most runs (14), runs batted in (8), and is tied with teammates Jerome Delos Santos, Byron Kaipat and 10 players with one triple.

The Hustlers also lay claim to the top doubles hitter in Oliver Secharmidail (4), but with all of their top performers they still had to claw their way back from a 2-4 record to take the top spot.

The Kautz Glass Glazers finished the season in second place at 5-5, but they had a 1-2-3 punch of hitters as well in Tyrone Omar, J.P. Sablan, and Tony Palacios.

Omar finished fifth in the batting race with a .333, tied Celis with 14 runs scored, and a triple. Sablan hit .308, scored nine runs, and is one of the few that hit a triple in league play. Palacios finished with a .286 at the plate, while teammates Ben Taisacan and Bill Kaipat

See SML on Page 27

Tinian netters take center stage on Saipan

By MARK RABAGO
REPORTER



A total of 14 singles and mixed doubles matches went down in the 2nd Annual

Taga Tennis Tournament at the American Memorial Park tennis courts Saturday. But the highlight of the evening was the action in the men's 3.0 doubles, where two teams from Saipan's southern neighbor tangled for the championship.

Lemuel Arabelo and Doi Ligan proved that patience pays when they finally hoisted the men's 3.0 crown following a hard-fought, three-set win over fellow Tinian tennis players Archie Montecilo and Joe San Nicolas.

Montecillo and San Nicolas, who defeated Massimo Flouti



MARK RABAGO

Lemuel Arabelo and Doi Ligan, left, pose with fellow Tinian tennis players Archie Montecilo and Joe San Nicolas before their men's 3.0 championship match Saturday in the 2nd Annual Taga Tennis Tournament.

and Christophe Bertin in the semis just the evening before, rode on that straight sets win to take the first set.

But Arabelo, who works on Saipan but goes home to his family on Tinian in the weekends, and Ligan buckled down to work and snatched the second to force a third and deciding set.

In the rubber set, Arabelo and Ligan, who advanced to the finals more than a week earlier, put out all the stops in the final race-to-six and took the win and the title in a score of 5-7, 6-3, 6-3.

The two pairs as well as tournament organizer, Saipan Tennis Association, and Tinian Tennis Association would like to thank Tinian Mayor Francisco Borja and the Tinian Mayor's Office for providing Tinian players

See TINIAN on Page 27